

## PERSONAL

"Ladies and gentlemen, perhaps I can explain briefly why I have called all the fifth-year teachers together for this very important meeting. As you know, we at East Swinscombe Comprehensive are ever at the forefront of new developments, and Councillor Bentley, our chairman of governors and a leading local businessman, has asked us to introduce a system of profiling instead of GCE and CSE exams to help employers interviewing school leavers."

"Excuse me, Headmaster, but I thought County Hall statistics showed that the job-getting success rate of our last year's leavers had fallen to minus 20 per cent, because not only did no one get a job, but 20 per cent actually came back and sat in the bicycle-sheds every day."

"We mustn't be too pessimistic, Mr Strotford. I feel we should recognize the pressure from the business community for profiles instead of exam results, and that is why I propose we scrap GCE and CSE for all our fifth-years and adopt a system of profiling instead."

"Now we have a lot to do, and you all live in front of you an alphabetical list of our 180 fifth-year pupils, plus the 200 item profile we

must complete on each pupil. Now, perhaps I can go through the names one by one and we can discuss each item on the schedule. The first name on our list is Shane Abbott of 5K and the first item on the pupil schedule is 'Can push, pull and lift things'. Any comments please? Yes, Miss Foley."

"Well, I would tend to rate him a good A on pushing, a middling C on pulling, but only a poorish D on lifting. I'm afraid. I suppose that makes him a B double minus overall."

"No, I'm sorry Miss Foley, we are not using grades. You will see that we simply have to tick either the 'yes' or 'no' box by each item, so the question is can Shane Abbott push, pull and lift things, yes or no?"

"Look Headmaster, can't we save a lot of time and simply tick all 200 'no' boxes for him, on the grounds that anyone saddled with a name like Shane can't be much cop at anything?"

"No, no, Mr Rainsbottom, that is precisely what we must not do. The whole point of scrapping formal exams is that we make a careful appraisal of each separate item for



Ted Wragg

every pupil, and do not let any personal prejudice produce a blanket response. Yes, Dr Grimshaw?"

"This may seem a little pedantic, Headmaster, but I did see him push Jane Ellis out of the way in the corridor yesterday. If he is capable of pushing people, may we infer he also has the capacity to push things? One other point, I did notice him pulling on his gumboots in the

cloakroom yesterday lunchtime, but he did need a little help, so I am not sure that qualifies him for the full tick."

"Headmaster, my view of Shane Abbott is that he pushes off at every opportunity, pulls fast unes, and lifts the dinner trolley when no one's looking, so can't we just give him his tick and get on to the next item?"

"Now please Mr Jenkins. I hope you and your colleagues in PE are not going to be frivolous about this matter. Before I give a ruling on the technical points raised by Dr Grimshaw, are there any other observations? Ah, Mr Barley."

"Headmaster, I must protest, we in the English department are totally against this monstrously crude way of dismembering fellow human beings. Shane is a very sensitive boy, and I am not willing to cumulate in a meeting on his pushing, pulling and lifting ability, except in the strictest confidence and with the full knowledge of his parents."

"Well, I hope the English staff will revise their position on that. Yes, Mr Battersby, an observation from the maths staff, is it?"

"Only to say that so far as I'm concerned, Shane Abbott is so inept that if he ever summoned enough energy to lift his pen he probably suffers a double hernia."

"Please, ladies and gentlemen, we must take this seriously. Do understand that by scrapping GCE and CSE and being the first school in Swinscombe to go over to pupil profiles we can really put East Swinscombe on the map. The business community will be pleased, and the ministers themselves are said to be very interested in what we are doing."

"Headmaster, we have 180 profiles to complete, each with 200 items. That makes 36,000 'yes' or 'no' ticks to be assigned. We have already spent 20 minutes trying to decide on the first item, and at this rate I calculate the exercise will take us 111 years. It is quite clear we cannot agree, so may I make a simple suggestion?"

"Certainly Miss Foley, anything that will get us out of this dreadful impasse and help us decide one way or the other about Shane Abbott's pushing, pulling and lifting ability. Please speak out, let us hear it. 'Couldn't we set an exam?'"

## ARISTIDES

## One last hearing for Children's Voice idea

A meeting at the National Children's Bureau today will decide whether the idea of a Children's Voice, which has been declining fast since the Government axed the Children's Committee 16 months ago, while competing pressure groups bickered over the body.

Protagonists at the meeting will include Nicholas Deakin, professor of social administration at Birmingham University and chairman of the group which produced last autumn's report "A Voice for all Children", together with members of his team, including George Cooke, secretary of the Society of Education Officers.

The host will be Dr Ronald Dove, director of the NCB, who counselled quite a stir at the meeting held last November to discuss the Deakin report with his forceful claim that there was no need to set up a new body to speak for all children, since the NCB was there to do just that. Also present will be



A H Halsey: an ideal multi-disciplinary man on children's needs

Peter Newell of the Children's Legal Centre, one of the fiercest critics at that same meeting of the NCB's ability to maintain a sufficiently independent and multi-disciplinary stance.

That particular conference confirmed that voluntary and statutory groups were deeply divided about the means, in spite of agreement about the desired end of action. Who were the agreed experts? What was meant by advocacy? Would there be more competition for funding?

The strength of the Children's Committee, the only tangible legacy of the Court Report on children's health, had been that it offered a united voice on children's needs in a departmentalised world. When it finally went down in a quango cull, the independent Deakin committee was set up by its own members to try to find a more effective way of carrying on. Which is where we came in.

The November meeting having ended inconclusively for all its blun-

ting, it was agreed to carry on the consultations. Now effectively over, they have narrowed down the options to two: a direct link to an existing organization, eg the NCB (the Ron Dove option); or a Congress (the Children's Legal Centre option). Or some combination of the two, which could well be the most likely outcome of today's meeting.

What might swiny opinions today is a shift in thinking at the NCB since last November's meeting.

Ron Dove had outlined then the changes he had been planning at the Bureau since he took over as director from Dr Min Kallimer Fringle. It had been decided to set up three multi-disciplinary study groups on education, health, and social services, each free to produce its own papers or instant response for the Bureau on particular issues. But how, inquired the critics reasonably, could they cut across the barriers of disciplines if they each had their separate label?

Since then, the same objection has been raised at the Bureau's AGM, and the revised plan is to set up just one multi-disciplinary study group. The specification for the chairman is that he should be an eminent sociologist who has worked in the unemulated fields, which sounds a lot like Professor A H Halsey that it would be surprising if he hadn't already been sounded out for the job.

The question, of course, is whether he could speak for all pressure groups, as well as for all children's needs.

## Sooner... or later

Equivocal news for anybody hoping for a statement from HM on the Legal Basis of Further Education.

As Baroness David pointed out, according to *Hansard* for January 20, a statement had been promised "shortly" back on October 21 1982.

The Earl of Swinton (after an exchange involving "several noble lords"): "My lords, I do not wish to commit the Government to a definite statement on whether 'soon' is sooner than 'shortly' or 'shortly' is sooner than 'soon', but I think that 'soon' is probably as shortly and as soon as possible."

## NEXT WEEK

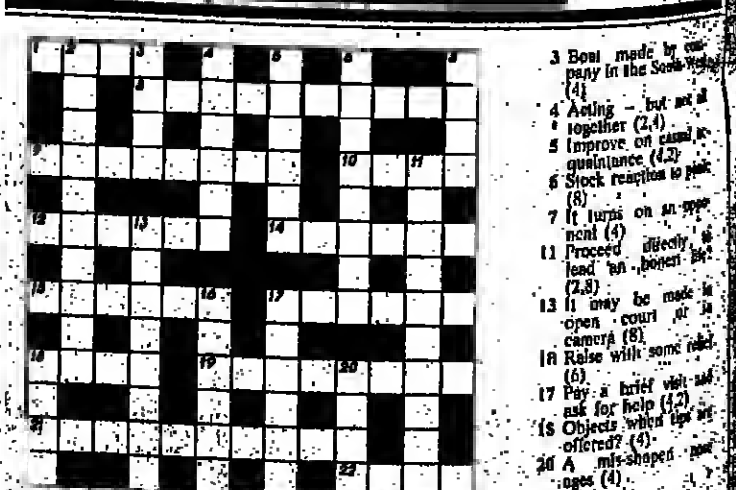
■ The middle age: why is Leicester shire expending its 10 to 14 schools when elsewhere middle schools are being closed to keep up the numbers in secondary schools?

■ School vouchers: never mind the theory... a look at how they have worked in practice.

■ Books: Gerald Fringle on studies of schools. A H Halsey on social research. Tom Corcoran on English history.

■ Extra: video and films.

## No 88 CROSSWORD by Ruffin



**Across**

- Where chickens prize the coldest patches (4)
- Firm belief may lead to imprisonment (10)
- Pinch between a hand and a foot (6)
- Who's in, who's out, who's in, who's out (4)
- Manager without an intermediary (6)
- It's said to be a (6)

**Down**

- 21 Across that shows in your face (6)
- They encourage men to drink (6)
- Food produced in layers (4)
- Loaded antennae? (6)
- Bliss associated with the early 1930s (10)
- Octa border; scenes to play (4)

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- 4 Where chickens prize the coldest patches (4)
- 11 Firm belief may lead to imprisonment (10)
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- 17 Manager without an intermediary (6)
- 19 It's said to be a (6)

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- 23 They encourage men to drink (6)
- 25 Food produced in layers (4)
- 27 Loaded antennae? (6)
- 29 Bliss associated with the early 1930s (10)
- 31 Octa border; scenes to play (4)

## THE TIMES

## Educational Supplement

FEBRUARY 18 1983 NUMBER 3477

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## School plan for air base

The United States Defence Department is to build a school for 700 pupils at Greenham Common air base. It will serve children of the armed military community which is based there if and when the missiles are in place.



The school will include a secondary and a high school. The plan has been approved by the local authority, but no date has been set for construction.

The present military base school has pupils up to 14. Its enrolment in October was 139.

No serious obstruction to the building of the school is expected, but peace protesters camping at the site (pictured right).

## Colleges fear turmoil over new YTS limit

by Mark Jackson

Remember the good old days of YOP?



Colleges are about to be told by the new Services Commission to back their new Youth Training Scheme courses to a maximum of 13 weeks. The commission's officials are already jockeying that they will be asked to pay for the much longer courses.

The decision is thought to have been made by the MSC by a growing fear that it will not find enough employers to sponsor trainees. This means that the commission would have to accept responsibility for a large number of youngsters who would be left without training.

But the commission has accepted the responsibility for meeting directly the costs of the other 160,000 youngsters: half of these, under the original plan, were to be sponsored by voluntary agencies and local authorities in various kinds of projects, and the remaining 80,000 by colleges.

For these, most colleges have planned six-month courses, to be followed by six months of work experience with one or more firms. But these would cost the commission, which has to pay the college fees and the £25 a week allowance to the youngsters, around £2,900 a trainee in all. Its officials have worked

out that by cutting back the college courses to the same length as those for Mode A and increasing the work experience to nine months, they can bring the total cost per trainee down to about £2,000.

An MSC headquarters official explained: "We just haven't got the money to do anything else for the first year of the scheme. It may be different in later years."

She agreed that the commission had encouraged many colleges to run pilot schemes for the YTS this year, based on six-month work skills courses, but said there has been "a change in the philosophy" in favour of longer work experience.

But a question being widely asked in the education sector and the careers service - one which she was unable to answer - is where the extra work experience placements are to come from. If the commission cannot find enough employers to give work to trainees for nine months of the year under Mode A, what likelihood is there of getting them to provide nine months' work experience under Mode B?

Mr Michael Harrison, Sheffield's education director, who is acting temporarily as the Association of Metropolitan Authorities education officer, said this week that the education service would, as always, try to cope with the situation, because it wanted to make the scheme work.

But Mr H. G. "Nobby" Clarke, principal of Windsor and Slough college, which has enthusiastically pioneered six-month courses, said: "If this is what they are going to do you can kiss goodbye to Mode B."

## Ban would go

Education officers, teachers, college lecturers and caretakers will all be allowed to be councillors in their local education committees under a radical plan almost certain to be included in Labour's next manifesto. Mr Gerald Kaufman, shadow environment spokesman, says he would legislate to abolish the current ban. Abolish the ban - report page 6

**16-plus**  
Shape of the new syllabuses  
pages 8,9

## Urgent talks due before teachers' pay offer

by Richard Garner

Urgent discussions will take place within the next fortnight on a radical restructuring of teachers' pay before local education authorities draw up their annual offer.

Both sides will meet on March 2, when teachers' leaders will emphasize the part of their pay claim which calls for a restructuring of the pay scales to reward long-service teachers trapped in their present jobs.

The outcome will be reported back to the full Burnham committee which negotiates teachers' pay. The I.C.S. are anxious to cost out any changes in the salary structure before making a pay offer.

Teachers' leaders are anxious to press for two immediate changes in

the salary structure. One would allow teachers to progress automatically through Scale 1 and Scale 2, and the other would create more Scale 3 posts in schools to offset the current lack of promotion prospects.

At present, teachers' leaders estimate about 90,000 teachers are trapped in their present jobs without any hope of promotion with the result that morale is extremely low.

Both sides will now table papers for the March 2 meeting. The management panel has been anxious to reward "good" classroom teachers but has wanted to introduce some form of assessment of teachers' performance before deciding who should be allowed to progress up the pay scales.

## NCC research handed over

by Virginia Makin

Mrs Sonie Jackson, lecturer in social administration at Bristol University, has handed over responsibility for a final report on the National Children's Centre in Huddersfield to Professor Phyllida Parolce, Bristol's professor of social work.

The National Children's Centre was largely inspired by Mrs Jackson's husband, Mr Brian Jackson, who is now its chairman. It was one of 10 innovative preschool schemes chosen for evaluation in a Social Science Research Council project directed by Mrs Jackson.

As reported in *The TES* (December 3, 1982) there was considerable dispute between Mrs Jackson and the project's field worker on the NCC case study over the content of the report on the NCC's work.

The SSRC and Bristol University have now agreed that Professor Parolce should do the final work on the NCC part of the project. An SSRC spokesman said it seemed an "acceptable mechanism" to remove the "obvious issue of role conflict" and speed up the project's final reports.

Letters, page 17

## Voucher trials

The only real test of the voucher system seemed to make little or no difference to children's learning.

## Arts/Books

Jonathan Dimbleby on the Israeli/Palestine, Sally Jenkins on the Russian Revolution; A H Halsey on social research; Nadim Lewis on children's literature. Text books on children's theatre and drama education

## Resources/Media

Discussion tapes on the rise of Europe; 60 years of BBC Children's Television; review of Johnny Ball's Maths Games

## EXTRA

Video and film: an evaluation of children's cinema; Is film dead? a survey of video cameras

## THIS WEEK

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Grammatical puzzle of the week: attempt to parse the following sentence.

"This Report may be reproduced in whole or in part except for commercial purposes or in, or in connexion with, a prospectus or advertisement provided that the source and date thereof are stated."

Source: the Crown Copyright note on the newly published HMI reports.



Which is your voucher nightmare, an empty school or a school full of undesirables?



## Anyone for reorganization - again?

As Labour's local government worthies limbered up for the coming local and national elections at Portsmouth last weekend (page 6), there was still a good deal of uncertainty about what will be offered to the electors. In its present mood, the Labour party is prepared to consider anything, no matter how sweeping, provided it overturns what the Tories have done and has a radical tinge to it. The Portsmouth conference did not shirk its duty, but laboured under the obvious difficulty of having no firm proposals to get its teeth into: all it had was a lengthy leak in *The Guardian* of a policy draft which was still being knocked into shape by the local government sub-committee of the Labour party's national executive committee.

What is clear is that both Labour and the Social Democrats are likely to enter the next election with important proposals for local government. The SDP still have to decide what they are prepared to commit themselves to. The party's education proposals are based on the assumption that Conservative controls on local government finance are going to be relaxed, and though they assume a more active, policy-making DES, they are intended also to reassure those who want to strengthen local government. For those outside the SDP this looks a bit like facing both ways but, always supposing they can lubricate the system with increased public spending, the contradictions might prove to be more apparent than real.

Labour, on the other hand, are toying with much more radical ideas: nothing less, in fact, than another full-scale reorganization. If the draft document carries the day it would substitute for the present system a two-tier structure consisting of a small number of large regional authorities and 300-400 most-purpose district authorities. The regional bodies would deal with water, economic planning, transport, and perhaps, even, the health service. The district authorities might vary in size from the big cities like Birmingham, Sheffield and Manchester (and those like Leicester and Portsmouth which used to be county boroughs before the last reorganization), to some quite small towns and rural districts. These district authorities of widely different size and character would have charge of education and most

of the other services.

From the educational point of view, some of the proposed L.E.A.s under such a scheme as this would be very small indeed. Labour's draft appears to regard this as of no consequence, presumably setting the value of intimacy above that of efficiency.

This is at odds with most of the advice they would get from the DES or from the existing L.E.A.s or from most academic local government "experts", but it is, of course, argued that such people are so committed to the present set-up as to be unable to stand back and look at it afresh. It would undoubtedly raise important questions for further education, and having regard to the importance of 16-19 in Labour's education proposals, there would obviously be important questions to ask and answer on that score; at first sight, a fragmented system of local education administration doesn't look a sound basis on which to erect Labour's ambitious tertiary plans which will undoubtedly need larger planning areas than seem to be envisaged here.

There is, however, a surreal touch to all this: who, in heaven's name, can view with any degree of equanimity the prospect of yet another bout of wholesale local government reorganization? Having experienced the trauma of Mr Peter Walker's efforts, who could advocate another go? Cutting 160 authorities down to 104 was a wastefully expensive business, involving a huge bill for redundancy and, initially at least, high administration costs. To replace the present L.E.A.s with 300-400 new ones would lead to yet another bureaucratic explosion. In electoral terms it sounds like a dead duck.

It may be, of course, that Labour's urge to abolish the counties is just political counterpoint to the Conservatives' threats against the GLC. It is deplorable how much of the present discussion seems to arise from gut political feelings. The same seems to be true of local authority finance, where the Conservatives' annual tinkering has been inspired by attempts to clobber Labour "overspenders" and the Labour local government discussion hinges on a search for a way of giving a Labour government the power to force recalcitrant Tory authorities to spend up to specified

limits, if this could be done without taking away discretion from the free-spending Labour cities. Mr Kinnock's argument for notional minimum standards seems to have won the day.

The fact is, of course, that everybody knows (and only party fanatics refuse to admit) that in office, a Labour chancellor is for more likely to be worried about over-spending than under-spending, and it is only the irresponsibility of opposition which blinds party leaders to this fact.

The Conservatives also have their plans for local government: specifically these may emerge in the execution of the proposed attack on the metropolitan counties; more indirectly they are implicit in suggestions of a full-blooded voucher scheme. Ironically, while Labour threatens to damage education by reorganizing local government, the Tories envisage the evisceration of local government by reorganizing education, the logic of the voucher being the end of education as a local government service. Of course, as with Labour's wilder fantasies, so with the Conservatives: there is a long way to go to turn farce into tragedy but it doesn't do to be complacent.

What should the parties do? They should forget about vouchers and forget about local government reorganization. And concentrate attention on a new financial basis for local education, alongside, but outside, the local government block grant. In other words, the time has come to devise financial mechanisms which are functional to specific services, of which education is one, not to the abstraction of local government as such. It also means accepting that marginal local authority "over-spending" is immaterial to the Chancellor's economic policy, and that heavy-handed attempts to restrain local spending - as now - have more to do with political *machismo* than the macroeconomic direction of the nation's affairs.

And, while it does not mean giving the DES detailed control over L.E.A. budgets, it should mean letting the DES intervene directly with funds in support of its own policy initiatives - something which it is now uniquely prevented from doing, while the MSC and the DOI push the boat out with impunity.

### COMMENT

## Criteria by the dozen

The latest clutch of proposed national criteria for the 16-plus examinations came through the latterbox this week with a resounding thud, and the first six are summarized on pages 8 and 9; the remainder will follow next week. They are difficult to summarize in the space available because they are dense and economically drafted, so the kind of report which can be incorporated within *The TES* is no substitute for a sight of the documents themselves, but there is a lot to be said for getting an overview which runs across the range of subjects covered by the exercise and this may be what *The TES* can provide.

It is acknowledged by critics and supporters alike that this is a major shake-up. At the end of the day, there should be greater clarity and consistency in the school examination system than there has ever been before.

There were two main aims in the review of criteria. One was to bring the GCE O level and CSE together into a single system of examining. The nature of this process has changed for political reasons. It is now less likely that pupils over the wide range of ability covered by 16-plus examinations will sit the same examination; more likely, in more subjects, different papers will

be set depending on the level of ability of the pupils and the standards of achievement demanded. This view corresponds to the political presumptions of Sir Keith Joseph and Dr Rhodes Boyson (not to mention the Prime Minister). It also received important practical support from the relevant sections of the Cockcroft report.

The second aim was to answer the criticism that, given the large numbers of boards and examination syllabuses, there was no knowing that mathematics or English meant the same thing in Kent as it did in Sunderland. In fact, there was always much more of a common core than flamboyant politicians cared to acknowledge, and the review of criteria has made this clear. Setting out clearly the essential elements in the subjects for which examinations are to be set should at least mean that schools and the "users" have a sounder knowledge of where they stand and how ignorant critics are to be answered.

As expected, the setting of aims and objectives has been easier - and better done - than the reflection of these aims in grade descriptions. This, of course, is the rub: it is always easier to set out aims than to say categorically what forms of study and examination can achieve or measure them. As for grade descriptions, the more clearly these are delineated - the nearer you can get to "criticism-referenced examining" - the more the schools are tempted to teach narrowly for the

tests, rather than interpret the aims as broadly as they deserve.

And of course, the whole exercise doesn't, in itself, dispose of argument against external exams at 16-plus: tuning up the exam machine will simply emphasize its impact on secondary education just when more and more people are becoming conscious of the damage now caused by over-dependence on exams.

## Michael Roberts, MP



Michael Roberts, MP, the junior minister at the Welsh Office with responsibility for education, who died last week after being taken ill in the House of Commons, was 55. He was a rare bird: a Conservative MP who, from his election in 1970 until he became a minister in 1979, was sponsored by the National Union of Teachers and was a staunch member of the union's Cardiff association throughout his career. At a time when many of his Conservative colleagues were busy reviling the NUT, he stayed in it and fought for his political principles, sometimes causing conflict but never offence.

Michael Roberts, whose father was rector of Neath, was educated at Neath Grammar School and studied history at University College Cardiff. In 1963, he became the first headmaster of the Bishop of Landaff Anglican High School in Cardiff, supervising its transition from a grammar to a comprehensive school. He is remembered as an outstanding headmaster, who knew every child's Christian name, and was passionately devoted to high standards for children of all abilities.

As Mr Peter Griffin, junior vice-president of the NUT, said this week: "It is a little unusual to find an ex-comprehensive head who, as minister in a Conservative Government, retained throughout the confidence and friendship of all his colleagues in the NUT."

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From the North West Examination Board's notes on grades in the Certificate of Secondary Education examinations.

## Second opinion HMI's in the open: first impressions

What are people thinking, I wonder, about the publication of HMI reports, now that the initial shock has worn off or so has seen the light of day? Some have wailed that the reports are too long, too tedious, too full of jargon, too full of statistics, too full of criticism, too full of blame, too full of... (the list goes on).

With whatever should be said about the reports, I suspect that most of us who read them find ourselves interested and gaining a much better view of what schools are like than we did before.

When we read that a school is "a caring community in which the pupils are accorded a high degree of respect and attention, to which the staff respond well with unaffected, relaxed, well-controlled behaviour, both in class and in the school", our hearts are warmed, and we are reminded that there is a great deal more to be said than those aspects which have been given such heavy emphasis in the Black Papers. Which is to say that all that the learning process have not come under their searching scrutiny and appraisal. But the reports put those who are into a human setting which across some sense of a school's personality.

To the best of my knowledge, even the local newspapers, were regarded by some as likely to seize upon isolated criticisms and give them undue prominence, have written sensibly and interestingly about the reports. It may be that some of the reports will be patently critical of school and will excite adverse publicity. Certainly such schools are likely to be anxious that they should, where appropriate, make much of their resources and material, provided by the school makes of those resources.

In any case, the purpose of reports is to be constructive. There is adverse criticism of a particular aspect of what a school is doing, the whole school, along with the L.E.A. will have to take its share in the business of dealing with it. And schools have not been inspected with anything like the care and attention which we have something to learn from. The reports of the Schools Inspectorate, which are no excuse for Scholasticism, a similar token, when schools what receives approval in inspected schools and are stimulated to development by their lines.

Meanwhile, we remember a matter of routine, the reports require L.E.A.s to report on "what action" they have taken, and is also a "mediate" where necessary L.E.A. and the HMI's in matters, even a counter-expression of "disturbance" L.E.A.s. Finally, one thing is the continuing value of the reports depends crucially upon the independence of the inspectors once enjoyed by the HMI's, an independence which will always be guarded jealously.

Donald

Mr Frith is secretary of the Primary Heads Association.

## Labour 'takeover' angers school's elected governors

by Nick Wood

Teacher and parent governors at a Derbyshire school are protesting about a "political takeover" of the governing body by a 12-strong group of Labour appointees.

The seven elected governors claim their views are regularly brushed aside by the majority, who are said to put politics before the interests of the school. In a meeting by going to a private session before the official governing body is convened.

One elected governor has already resigned in protest at the actions of the controlling Labour group. Now the others say they will raise the issue at the next meeting of the parents' association at Chesterfield school which has 800 boys aged 13 to 18.

Mr Roger Freestone, chairman of the parents' association and one of the governors, said: "What angers us so much is that we are simply being politically manipulated. Our presence on the governing body as parents' and teachers' representatives gives the impression we approve of actions taken in our name. In effect we have no say."

Two issues are believed to have brought the divisions to a head: support for sixth-form colleges and down by Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary - and the backing of panels involved in the recruitment and promotion of teachers.

Chesterfield has a sixth form of 100 boys, the result of transferring 13-year-olds from other schools, and the elected governors have been asked to support for Labour support for the school.

They also say they have no real say over decisions on staffing and their representative on the governing body.

Presumably the aim was to facilitate a Marxist takeover of society, he said.

Mr Pont's explanation threw a different light on comments by Dr Rhodes Boyson, the education minister, who in a speech to Brent Conservatives last week accused Labour authorities of "packing" school governing bodies with one-party political appointees.

Dr Boyson referred to events at Chesterfield as an example of what seemed "a growing left-wing plot" in some Labour-controlled authorities to destroy both excellence and order in schools.

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three-men panels is always outnumbered.

Mr Robert Pont, vice-chairman of the governors and a Labour appointee, said that the so-called clandestine meetings were rather a "gathering of like minds". They were not held regularly and were called only when there was a specific matter of Labour policy, such as his proposals for secondary reorganization, to be discussed.

They had recently introduced a new system of choosing governors for appointments panels which would give teachers and parents more say, he added.

He also said that the Conservatives had only themselves to blame for the fact that all the political appointees came from the party that controlled the county council and the local borough council. Under the previous Labour administration there had been a mix of councillors reflecting the relative strengths of the parties, but this had been scrapped by the last Tory council which had insisted on all the places being filled by its own people.

Labour was only following the Tories' example, he said.

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## Durham staff call strike

Teachers in three Durham secondary schools will begin an indefinite strike today. This follows the breakdown of talks between the Durham Education Authority and the Durham Teachers' Association over plans to axe teachers' jobs.

This is the union's first indefinite stoppage since the six-week strike by NUT members in Labour-controlled Barking and Dagenham last year over plans to axe teachers' jobs.

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### NEWS

## Children in tears after head's hoax

Education officers have launched an inquiry into a headmaster's hoax that reduced children to tears.

Mr Robert Chester, head of Sylvan High School in Croydon, told 250 first and second-formers that terrorists had invaded the town and planted bombs in the sewers.

The Army was bringing in blankets, he said, so that they could stay overnight at the 1,100-pupil comprehensive. The children were told to return to their classrooms and hold discussions before writing letters to their parents.

Later, angry parents protested about the "creative writing" lesson that shocked their children.

Mrs Barbara Webb, one of the parents, said: "The children were hysterical. One child who is a diabetic was in a panic in case he missed his insulin injection. Others were crying and shaking. My own 12-year-old daughter, Joanne, who is very stable, was terrified."

Croydon education committee added its voice to the parents' demands for an inquiry. This week, Mr Donald Naismith, the director of

education, will deliver a report to the committee.

Mr Chester was reported as saying: "The children should have been told within a few minutes that this was a hoax, but some were not."

"Each year we try to give a convincing reason to pupils why they should stay at school for one night. They are then asked to discuss their feelings about it."

"I am very embarrassed about it. It obviously went wrong. We will not be trying it again."

## Brent answers criticism of education policies

by Hilary Wilce

A defence of three controversial areas of Brent's education policy was due to be made this morning by the Labour-controlled authority's education chairman, Mr Bryn Stark, following vociferous criticism of the policies from parents.

The areas are mother tongue teaching, student participation in school affairs, and council relations with Brent teachers.

A petition with 300 signatures protesting against the council's mother tongue teaching policy was presented to the education committee earlier this month. The protesters emphasized that they were not racist, but said they feared that basic educational standards might drop as a result of resources being deflected into the teaching of Asian languages.

Heads and teachers have been angered by a direction from the

authority telling them to encourage pupils to join the National Union of School Students, or similar bodies.

Mr Stark said this week that these policies had been misunderstood. The authority was committed to mother tongue teaching because research had shown that it had many benefits for Asian children.

On the question of the schools' organization, he wanted to make clear "how we in the Labour Party saw the whole question of accountability in education. What we are attempting to do is to widen the responsibility for things like curriculum and organization."

The council wanted to encourage students "to play a part in their own schools".

The original policy, suggesting pupils should join the National Union of School Students had been formulated some time ago, but since then the NUSS had become defunct.



Bob Richardson: vote defeat?

## Threat to union leader

by Richard Garner

Mr Bob Richardson, one of the National Union of Teachers' most influential leaders, may have lost his position after 15 years because of an election triumph by left-wingers.

The first two counts in the Inner London Teachers' Association annual election showed that Mr Richardson, the general secretary, had been beaten by his left-wing rival, Mr Richard Rieger, secretary of the Hackney Teachers' Association.

In fact, the Left scored a clean sweep - with Ms Carole Regan beating Mr Colin Yardley in the election for treasurer and Mr John Bangs beating Mr John Harrington for vice-presidency. Both Ms Regan and Mr Bangs are members of the Socialist Teachers' Alliance, a left-wing pressure group in the NUT.

However, the result had not been declared as *The TES* went to press because of discrepancies in the voting figures, with a decision to be taken as to whether the result should stand, an independent body be asked to count the votes again, or the election be held again.

## Council grant

The Arts Council strengthened its commitment to education this week when Sir Roy Shaw, its secretary-general, announced an £85,000 allocation for specifically educational purposes.

It represented, he said, "a powerful move against the illism which is still alive and well in the arts world."

Companies supported by the council would have to show evidence of some involvement in education and would be encouraged to fund projects jointly with the council.

## L.E.A.s to resist cuts in polys intake

Local education authorities will resist any cut in the proportion of pupils entering their colleges of further education over the next three years, even though funds are to fall by 10 per cent.

But the institutions themselves warned that squeezing in more pupils for less money will threaten the gap between the public and the universities, where student numbers have been cut to record levels. At a meeting

of the National Advisory Board for local authority higher education, on Tuesday, a decision on student numbers was therefore deferred.

The meeting discussed a paper from the Department of Education which showed that colleges and polytechnics, once again increased the proportion of 18 year olds they admitted last autumn, from 5.2 to 5.6 per cent, exceeding even local authorities' predictions. The paper said they could either maintain that level or cut their entry this year and

next to the level of 1981, with a further cut in 1985-86.

Maintaining the level would mean a small reduction in home intake of some 500 students to 66,000 this autumn.

The Queen has granted a Royal Charter to the University College at Buckingham, Britain's only independent university. It was announced this week. In two months' time, the seven-year-old college will become the University of Buckingham and will gain the right to grant all degrees.

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## NEWS

## L.e.a. ducks pool charges directive

Solihull education authority has decided to play for time in its battle with the Department of Education over swimming charges.

Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, wrote to the Tory-controlled authority last November saying that it could not charge for swimming provided as part of the curriculum and asking it formally to reconsider its policy. Solihull currently charges 40p per session for admission and tuition and pupils also pay transport costs averaging 50p.

Now the authority has decided to ignore Sir Keith's request to change its policy. Instead, Councillor Michael Ellis, chairman of the education committee, has written back asking formally for a reply to representations the authority made to Dr Rhodes Boyson, junior education minister, a year ago. At a meeting in the Commons, a council delegation asked Dr Boyson for amending legislation to make charges for swimming and other activities legal. He promised a reply from the Education Secretary which the council says it has never received.

There is little doubt that Sir Keith's reply will repeat recent statements he has made to Surrey and other authorities that he has no present intention of changing the law and that they must either stop charging or make other arrangements. But Solihull Tories know that the Education Secretary would be unlikely to force their hand by resorting to a High Court writ in the run-up to a General Election.

Meanwhile, Surrey County Council has angered parents by suggesting to headteachers that voluntary contributions could keep going some of the private music tuition which it had to stop at the end of last year.

A statement from Mr Malcolm Pinehills, the county education officer, says there is no reason why parents should not make voluntary contributions towards music tuition. But he adds that, to be legal, they must be "under the aegis of an outside body such as a parent-teacher association and not of the headteacher" and that there must be no direct link between those contributing and those receiving tuition.

The county council does not, however, actually expect many schools will be able to sustain private music tuition on this basis. The county's own music centres, however, which were set up last Easter and operate out of school hours, are said to be working extremely well. They now attract as many pupils as received "tuition" from L.e.a. teachers in schools before the High Court judgment ruled out charging for activities provided as part of the curriculum.

Pupils who are allowed or encouraged to speak non-standard English are having a cruel trick played on them, according to a pamphlet published this week.

In *The Language Trap*, Professor John Honey, head of the department of education at Leicester Polytechnic, confronts those theorists who claim that forms of English like Jamaican creole and Cockney are just as good as standard English. "There is no proof that they are as effective as a means of communication," he says, and they certainly hinder social mobility.

"Whether we like it or not the 'language of the state' in Britain is standard English," he argues. "Any action which implies the ability of any future citizen to communicate adequately in the medium is an act of political emancipation, quite apart from any specific threat it poses to that individual's likely success in the educational system."

He therefore urges English teachers to go back to teaching formal grammar; it is not necessary to

## The standard English way to succeed

lose a regional accent but, to gain public acceptance, a speaker must be able to use standard English grammar and vocabulary.

Professor Honey cites Mr Arthur Scargill, the miners' leader, and Professor A L Rowse, the historian, as examples of working class people who "made good" by mastering standard English. By contrast, at least some of the public animosity towards Mr Ray Buckton, leader of the train drivers' union ASLEF, was caused by his non-standard grammar.



A L Rowse Ray Buckton

He says parents among the underprivileged understand the importance of standard English better than anyone else. In the United States, for instance, black parents feel censored and resentful over attempts to promote the use of "Black English" in schools.

Teacher trainers are blamed for spreading the "sinister claptrap" of linguistic theorists who say one variety of English is as good as another and that no attempt should be made to improve or correct non-standard forms.

Teachers should abandon these views and become once again the model of good spoken English, Professor Honey says. Children should be encouraged to use a variety of speaking styles, including standard English.

Above all, however, teachers must return to teaching grammar. "Because the children of the underprivileged classes start out with no opportunities for absorbing naturally the grammar and idiom of standard English in the home, it is the underprivileged who have suffered most from the fact that Britain is virtually the only advanced country in the world which does not teach the grammar of its language explicitly in its schools," Professor Honey says.

*The Language Trap*, race, the "standard English" in British schools, published by the National Council for Educational Standards, 1 Chapman Kenton, Middlesex, £1.95.

Biddy Pashley

Sarah Bayliss reports on the Labour Local Government Conference

## Election manifesto may push to abolish shires and set up regions

The abolition of the 47 shire counties in England and Wales and the introduction of national standards for education and other services are emerging as strong candidates for inclusion in Labour's next manifesto.

Firm proposals for replacing the county councils with smaller unitary authorities running local services like education on "realistic minimum standards" were outlined by Mr Gerald Kaufman, Shadow spokesman on the environment, at the party's annual local government conference held last weekend in Portsmouth.

He told the conference that all-purpose authorities were now recognized as the most democratic and efficient type of councils. The next Labour government would therefore legislate to create unitary district authorities responsible for all the local functions they could sensibly undertake. "We shall liberate Portsmouth from Hampshire," he said.

There would be consultations but no more formal inquiries. "The next Labour government will act decisively to give local government back to the people."

Later in an education working group, Mr Neil Kinnock, Labour's education spokesman, stressed the need for national standards and guidelines for education - an idea which he first publicized at the conference held last year. They would guarantee every child adequate books, teaching materials, class sizes and subject teachers. He said they would halt the widening disparities in provision observed by HMI across the country and would - to quote HMI - "ensure that every child has equal access to the basic enabling programmes of education".

He included national standards in a six-point programme for education to which the next Labour government would be committed. The programme was, he said, "the most exciting and demanding to confront L.e.a.s. since the war".

The continuum was to establish a truly comprehensive and properly resourced system. There would be definition in law of comprehensive education giving all children the right to equal access to a broadly-based curriculum; nursery places for all families which wanted them; smaller classes and full community involvement in primary schools; a properly planned tertiary system and education available to all post-16 "not only those who've successfully leaped all the academic hurdles".

Earlier, in an opening address to the conference, Mr Michael Foot, the party leader, pledged that existing local government spending targets would be abolished and the system of grants simplified "so that

finance is not a brake on improving services". Grant related expenditure assessments (GREs) would no longer be used for distributing rate support grant and the potential of a local income tax would be explored.

The expansion of education was a specific priority with the emphasis on under-fives and adult training and education. "This will be a much greater challenge than spending £15bn to keep people unemployed." "Politicians' speeches apart, the conference had no detailed information on the radical plans for restructuring local councils since a policy paper from the national executive of a local government committee had not been agreed in time. But a draft paper leaked to the *Guardian* last Friday showed that the shire counties might be replaced by as many as 300 to 400 all-purpose authorities, possibly based on existing district councils.

It accused county councils of being too large and remote; the

such agreement from the floor on the need for national minimum standards.

But several leaders of metropolitan counties accused the local government committee of failing to think through the policies. The notion of nominated regional bodies was preposterous, especially when it would mean throwing away the existing control which Labour had in the metropolitan counties. Nnr did the districts have the resources to carry out full socialist programmes.

Mr David Hellwell from West Yorkshire called the suggestions "half-baked" and got applause when he suggested that Labour should insist on all parliamentary candidates having some local government expertise in the shape of experience as councillors.

In the main conference debate, there were conflicting views on the best solution for education. Mrs Audrey Ramsden, a Labour councillor from St Albans, said education was run best by large, well-resourced authorities which attracted officers of high calibre. The most progressive education authority was the largest - the Inner London Education Authority. "We certainly don't want education given to St Albans," she said.

Mrs Pat Hawkes, a member of the Brighton Labour group and divisional secretary for the National Union of Teachers, said she would welcome unitary authorities running education. "The Brighton and Hove combination is lost in a sea of Tory complacency." She was marginally in favour of national standards to help iron-out growing inequalities across the country but feared that rather than rising to a high standard many councils would stoop to the minimum.

The education working group had a session on education finance and was addressed by Dr Alan Crispin, senior lecturer in education administration at the University of London Institute of Education. He believed national standards were wrongly dismissed for being centralist and that their advantages outweighed the disadvantages. What used to be healthy differences between authorities had become widening disparities and the rights of individual children to equal provision needed protection.

Replying, Mrs Josie Farrington, chairman of education for Lancashire, warned against intervention by Whitehall which might inhibit the initiative of local government. Labour's priority should be to release Labour councils from the present financial constraints so they could fulfil their commitments to local people. To protect education in Conservative areas, Labour should twist the present system of



Gerald Kaufman: all-purpose units

unitary authorities would be capable of serving local needs. It conceded there would be fears that some authorities would be too small to offer adequate services, particularly in education and social services.

"But the difficulties should not be exaggerated. Every district has several, if not a great many, primary schools, and all but a tiny handful have more than one secondary school. That is an adequate base for any educational administration."

Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody, who chairs the local government committee, said that the party generally agreed the Conservative-dominated shire counties should be abolished and that, outside London, the metropolitan counties should be replaced - partly by the new unitary authorities and partly by large regional councils, perhaps nominated rather than elected. These large regional bodies would have responsibility for utilities like water and possibly health. She was pleased there was

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# 16-plus

## GCE and CSE Boards' Joint Council for 16-plus National Criteria

### MATHEMATICS

The joint council has decided that every scheme of assessment in mathematics must include differentiated exams - normally at three levels of assessment. It finds this quote from the Cockcroft report "particularly apt": "Pupils must not be required to prepare for examinations which are not suited to their attainment nor much these examinations be of a kind which will undermine the confidence of the pupils."

The council lists 15 aims for all courses in mathematics. They include:

- Develop a feel for number, make calculations and understand the significance of the results obtained;
- Use mathematics as a means of communication with emphasis on the use of clear expression;
- Develop the abilities to reason logically, to classify, to generalize and to prove; and
- Acquire a foundation appropriate to a further study of mathematics and other related disciplines.

It lists 15 assessment objectives - an essential minimum list of qualities, abilities and skills - on which all candidates will be tested. They include:

- Recall, apply and interpret mathematical knowledge in the context of everyday situations;
- Organize, interpret and present information accurately in written, tabular, graphical and diagrammatic forms;
- Use an electronic calculator;
- Use mathematical instruments to measure and to draw to an acceptable degree of accuracy;
- Recognize and apply spatial relationships in two and three dimensions; and
- Apply combinations of mathematical skills and techniques in problem-solving.

Content is divided into two common cores. List one contains the minimum content that must be included in any scheme which bears the title "mathematics". In any scheme for which a grade 3 may be awarded, list one must be supplemented at least by the content of items in list two. In any scheme for which grades 1 and 2 will be available, lists one and two must represent 50 to 70 per cent of the total content.

The council has "pruned" the lists after consultation with schools, colleges, examining boards, teaching associations, the Inspectorate and national organizations. A syllabus for which all grades are available would have a "considerable number" of topics in addition to those in the lists.

List one items include: whole numbers; odd, even, prime and square. Factors, multiples, idea of square root. Vulgar and decimal fractions and percentages; conversion between these forms.

List two items include: natural numbers, integers, rational and irrational numbers; square roots; common factors, common multiples, and standard form.

The council says it is "inappropriate" to give a relationship between assessment objectives and content. The relationship must be "flexible" in order that the objectives can be pursued, and the extent of their attainment assessed, using items of content which are appropriate to the various abilities of the individual candidates.

Under techniques of assessment, it says that in any scheme of examination offering the full range of grades there need be no common paper taken by all candidates. Every scheme must contain at least one end-of-course written exam paper. Written exam papers must account for at least 50 per cent of the assessment.

Course work will be optional but if taken must account for at least 20

The joint Council for 16-plus national criteria has sent the bulk of its proposals to Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, this week, over two years after it was set up, *Nick Wood writes.*

The proposals affect English, English literature, mathematics, biology, chemistry, computer studies, craft, design and technology, classical subjects, geography, religious studies, social sciences and music.

Criteria for business studies, economics, creative art, home economics, and combined sciences have yet to be submitted. History, French and physics have already been sent to the DES. The proposals cover the minimum, but essential, requirements for a syllabus to qualify as acceptable for the proposed new exam. They do not specify the detailed content of such syllabuses, nor do they lay down rules for methods of assessment. These will be determined later by the examining groups that will run the 16-plus.

In each subject, the criteria are intended as a basis for future development.

"The joint council wishes to emphasize that it has not seen its task as being to provide a set of criteria which will set the pattern of the secondary school curriculum in a particular, permanent mould. The council has in general attempted to provide guidelines for examinations within which present teaching approaches can continue, so far as they are appropriate to a single system of examining, and which will also be sufficiently flexible to allow new developments to take place."

The new batch of criteria will now be scrutinized by Sir Keith Joseph and Mr Nicholas Edwards, the Welsh Education Secretary.

Sir Keith has said that the 16-plus will go ahead only if the secretaries of state are satisfied with the criteria. In coming to this decision he will be guided by the new exam council under the chairmanship of Sir Wilfred Cockcroft, which comes into being in April.

The business of drawing up national criteria for 20 subjects has never been attempted before - in Britain or elsewhere. Not surprisingly, it has given rise to a jargon of its own.

The main points from the subject criteria submitted to Sir Keith are summarized below. But first the key terms that determine the structure and content of the joint council's submissions are defined as follows.

Aims: This term refers to a statement of the educational

syllabus provided for pupils within the context of the single system of examining at 16-plus. A statement of aims is likely to be broader than the associated statement of assessment objectives (which is concerned with examinable skills/abilities) and may well include qualities and attributes which cannot or should not be assessed for examination purposes - for example, the pupil's motivation and attitude to the subject.

Aims should consist of clear statements setting out the educational purposes of following a course in the particular subject for all the potential candidates.

Assessment objectives: This term describes the skills/abilities which are measured and recorded for assessment purposes within a particular subject examination. Such assessment objectives should be expressed in terms of the observable and measurable behaviour which the achievement of the educational aims of a course in the subject is intended to bring about.

Common core (syllabus): A common core (used of an examination syllabus) is the body of subject content and the range of skills or activities which will form part of the assessment, which all pupils following a course in the subject are normally expected to have covered (probably to a specified depth) and which should be included in all examination syllabuses in the subject.

A common core might form part of the national criteria laid down for a subject or be specified by an individual examining group for all the syllabuses which it certifies under a particular title.

Course work: Used in connexion with examinations, this term comprises all types of activity carried out by candidates during their course of study and assessed for examination purposes.

Differentiated examinations/components: A differentiated examination is one in which different components are deliberately set at different levels of difficulty to meet the needs of candidates of different levels of ability.

Grade descriptions: The term grade descriptions has been adopted for the attempt to describe, in positive and subject specific terms, the expected attainment of candidates in grade 3 and grade 6 of the new examination. The descriptions are intended to indicate the levels of attainment likely to be shown by candidates awarded particular grades in a subject.

per cent of the assessment to make it worthwhile for both teachers and candidates.

Two grade descriptions are given. Grade 6 candidates would show a good knowledge of the subject content, contained in list one and would be familiar with the associated processes and skills. They would be able to apply this knowledge to single-concept problems of a type previously encountered.

Grade 3 candidates would show a good knowledge of the subject content contained in both lists one and two and would be able to execute accurately the processes and skills associated with the content of list one. They would be able to apply the knowledge, processes and skills to structured situations and show an ability to select a correct strategy to solve a multi-concept problem.

### ENGLISH

The subject English is to be regarded as a single unified course leading to an assessment in English. It may also lead to a separate assessment in English literature.

The aim is to develop the ability of students to communicate accurately, appropriately and effectively in speech and writing; to understand and respond imaginatively to what they hear, read and experience in a variety of media; and to foster their enjoyment and appreciation of the reading of literature.

Spoken English will be a compulsory part of assessment in English but it will be separately assessed and recorded on the exam certificate using a different, shorter grade scale.

Examination subject English: seven assessment objectives are listed. They include:

- Understand and convey information;
- Evaluate information in reading material and in other media; and select what is relevant to specific purposes;
- Articulate experience and express what is felt and what is imagined; and

- Exercise care for the convenience of paragraphing, sentence structure, punctuation and spelling in the written form of the language. Content is described under three headings - oral communication, reading and writing.

Under oral communication, the council says that children should be able to develop their skills as listeners and speakers, both individually and in groups.

Reading should take in literary and non-literary material - short stories, novels and newspapers. Writing should cover routine tasks such as letter-writing and preparing reports and creative writing.

The council does not dictate how spoken English should be assessed. Reading aloud, group discussions and individual interviews can all be valuable.

A variety of methods can be used to assess how well a candidate has understood passages he has read. These can include oral questioning but they must involve written responses - ranging from closely structured to open-ended. Structured sets of short answer questions are described as "useful" but multiple choice questions should be restricted to board-based assessment.

Closed writing tasks such as letter writing can be used to assess understanding as well as writing abilities. Coursework can be an effective method of assessing creative writing.

The council recommends that a combination of coursework and final examinations should be used to assess attainment in English. Examinations should consider the possible place of differentiated exams.

Grade descriptions are set out for grade 6 and grade 3 candidates. Among the attributes of a grade 6 candidate would be competence in:

- Understanding and conveying information at a straightforward level;
- Understanding basic facts, ideas and opinions and presenting them with a degree of coherence; and
- Recognizing clear meanings and explicit attitudes.

- Understanding and conveying information both at a straightforward and at a more complex level;
- Understanding facts, ideas and opinions and entering and presenting them with a degree of clarity and accuracy; and
- Recognizing the more obvious implicit meanings and attitudes.

Examination subject English literature: two assessment objectives are listed. They include:

- Acquire first-hand knowledge of the content of literary texts;
- Understand literary texts, in ways which may range from a grasp of their surface meaning to a deeper awareness of their themes and attitudes; and

Recognize and appreciate ways in which writers use language.

Detailed study of individual texts, the majority of which must have been written in English, should comprise the central core of the subject. It must also include wider reading in the three main literary genres - prose, poetry and drama. Works for detailed study must be selected from two of these forms. Authors rather than works may be set to allow a wide range of texts.

Between 60 and 75 per cent of the total marks in the subject must be allowed to detailed study of individual texts.

Techniques of assessment should take in extended writing, structured sets of short answer questions and the use of "unseen" passages in exams. Assessment could be by coursework alone, which provides wider evidence of a candidate's achievement than formal exams, or a combination of the two.

Examining groups should consider the possible place of differentiated exams. Grade descriptions are set out for grade 6 and grade 3 candidates. Among the attributes of a grade 6 candidate would be competence in:

- Giving a straightforward account of the content of literary texts in terms of narrative and situation;
- Understanding the surface meaning of literary texts; and
- Communicating a straightforward personal response to the texts studied.

died.

A grade three candidate would be competent in:

- Giving an account of the content of literary texts, with detailed reference to the context, where appropriate, in narrative and situation;
- Understanding literary texts at a deeper level and showing awareness of their themes, attitudes and attitudes; and
- Communicating an informed personal response to the texts studied.

The council adds a section on English in a multicultural society. It says examining boards should consider whether to introduce additional exams at 16-plus intended for children for whom English is a second language.

In framing syllabuses, examining groups will need to bear in mind linguistic and cultural differences. All candidates will be expected to demonstrate their command of the standard form of written languages, but other languages are not thereby excluded, and in spoken language where fluency will be decisive.

### BIOLOGY

The council lists 10 aims for biology. They include:

- To develop a life-long interest and enjoyment of the study of living organisms;
- To develop knowledge and understanding of fundamental biological concepts and principles;
- To promote an appreciation of the importance and relevance of biological science to the study of biology; and
- To promote a respect for life.

The 10 assessment objectives are:

- To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of biological principles, practical techniques and the use of biological equipment;
- To apply biological knowledge to the study of biology; and
- To promote a respect for life.

A grade 3 candidate would have attempted a fairly simple problem and would probably have tackled it using pre-written software. The test would cover most obvious aspects of the system and the documentation would be of a fairly elementary level.

A grade 6 candidate would have attempted a worthwhile problem and would have tackled it reasonably well. The testing would include all the important aspects of the system, although it is unreasonable to expect such candidates to produce working systems.

Candidates would know the limitations of their systems and be able to suggest improvements they might be able to implement themselves. Their algorithms could be quite inefficient but their documentation would enable an intelligent reader to follow their method of solution.

Four themes describe the minimum core - diversity of relationships between organisms and their environment; and maintenance of the continuity of life.

The council sets out the relationship between objectives and content. It is given to objectives knowledge and understanding, and themes two and three.

Grade descriptions are set out for grade 6 and grade 3 candidates. A grade 6 candidate is expected to be familiar with a sufficient range of facts to be able to answer straightforward biological questions or problem and to be able to apply routine procedural knowledge.

A grade 3 candidate is expected to possess a cohesive body of knowledge sufficient to allow him to appreciate the significance of a biological problem or to draw conclusions from their results.

A minimum core of content, to cover 50 per cent of any complete syllabus, is set out. The topics are: experiments; elements and compounds; ideas, models, patterns and theories; chemistry in industry; and social, economic, environmental and technological contributions and applications of chemistry.

The core should be expanded by covering items in greater depth or by adding new items.

- Detailed relationships between assessment objectives and content are set out. The specified topics must attract 60 per cent of the marks on every scheme of examination.
- Differentiated schemes of assessment must be used for all syllabuses and examinations attracting the full range of grades. Syllabuses offering limited grade awards may allow all candidates to be assessed on totally common papers.
- Four techniques of assessment are approved: objective questions, short answer questions, structured questions and free response questions.
- Assessment of practical work is essential. A written paper, practical test or school assessment are all suitable methods.
- Descriptions of grade 6 and grade 3 candidates are given.
- The grade 6 candidate would be likely to show some experimental skills. Such a candidate would also be able to demonstrate a reasonable competence in the assessment objectives, knowledge, and some competence.

### COMPUTER STUDIES

The council lists seven aims. They include:

- Foster an awareness of what characterizes information, information processing and computer systems;
- Develop reasoning, judgment and persistence in applying, creatively, information processing technology to problems which are relevant and worthwhile to the student; and
- Develop an awareness of ethical, social, economic and political consequences of the use of computers for individuals, organizations and society through the study of meaningful applications.

Five assessment objectives are given. They include:

- Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the techniques needed to solve problems;
- Use computers sensibly to produce solutions to appropriate problems and to document their solutions; and
- Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the functions of the main hardware and software components of a computer system and their relationships with the representation of stored data and programs.

The core content is described by specific objectives under each of the five assessment objectives. The council believes a list of topic areas would be ambiguous.

Weights are given to each of the assessment objectives. Differentiated elements in schemes of assessment are suggested as being most likely to fulfil specified assessment goals.

Assessment should be undertaken in a "worked" written papers and word-based or school-based assessment. The objective involving the use of computers can only be satisfied by school-based assessment over an extended period of time.

Written papers must make up at least 60 per cent of the total marks. Additional assessment objectives can be added to the syllabus.

Grade descriptions for grade 6 and grade 3 candidates are given. A grade 6 candidate would have attempted a fairly simple problem and would probably have tackled it using pre-written software. The test would cover most obvious aspects of the system and the documentation would be of a fairly elementary level.

A grade 3 candidate would have attempted a worthwhile problem and would have tackled it reasonably well. The testing would include all the important aspects of the system, although it is unreasonable to expect such candidates to produce working systems.

Candidates would know the limitations of their systems and be able to suggest improvements they might be able to implement themselves. Their algorithms could be quite inefficient but their documentation would enable an intelligent reader to follow their method of solution.

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### 16-plus

Next week we summarize the proposals for religious studies, social sciences, music, classical subjects and geography.

The council's framework takes in these three titles. Aims, assessment objectives, techniques of assessment and grade descriptions are set out for the parent course of CDT - content and its relationship to assessment objectives is spelled out for each of the three endorsement titles.

The endorsement title design and realization applies to courses involving students in the designing, making and evaluation of artefacts and requiring the use of resistant materials such as wood, metal and plastics.

Technology applies to courses in which control and/or systems design, making and evaluation form the major part and which draw upon the application of scientific and technical knowledge.

Design and communication applies to courses mainly concerned with design and communication skills and which will include drawing and related graphical techniques, model-making and evaluation.

The aims include:

- To foster awareness, understanding and expertise in those areas of creative thinking which can be expressed and developed through investigation and research, planning,

designing, making and evaluating and working with materials and tools.

The assessment objectives include:

- Gather, order and assess the information relevant to the solution of practical and technological problems.
- Analyse and produce design specifications for problems which have been self-identified or posed by others.

A combination of a formal examination and the assessment of practical and design skills as demonstrated by various forms of coursework is recommended as the best way of measuring attainment.

A grade 6 candidate will be able to make a limited investigation of a problem posed by others... He will demonstrate limited manipulative skills with at least one material... His oral and written communication will be restricted and his graphic skills limited... His knowledge will be superficial.

A grade 3 candidate will be able to identify a problem and make a clear statement of the design brief... He will be able to show evidence of good workmanship and sound construction in the material(s) used... He will be able to demonstrate a range of communication skills...

Three titles are proposed - CDT: design and realization, CDT: technology, and CDT: design and communication.

The council believes a list of topic areas would be ambiguous.

Weights are given to each of the assessment objectives. Differentiated elements in schemes of assessment are suggested as being most likely to fulfil specified assessment goals.

Assessment should be undertaken in a "worked" written papers and word-based or school-based assessment. The objective involving the use of computers can only be satisfied by school-based assessment over an extended period of time.

Written papers must make up at least 60 per cent of the total marks. Additional assessment objectives can be added to the syllabus.

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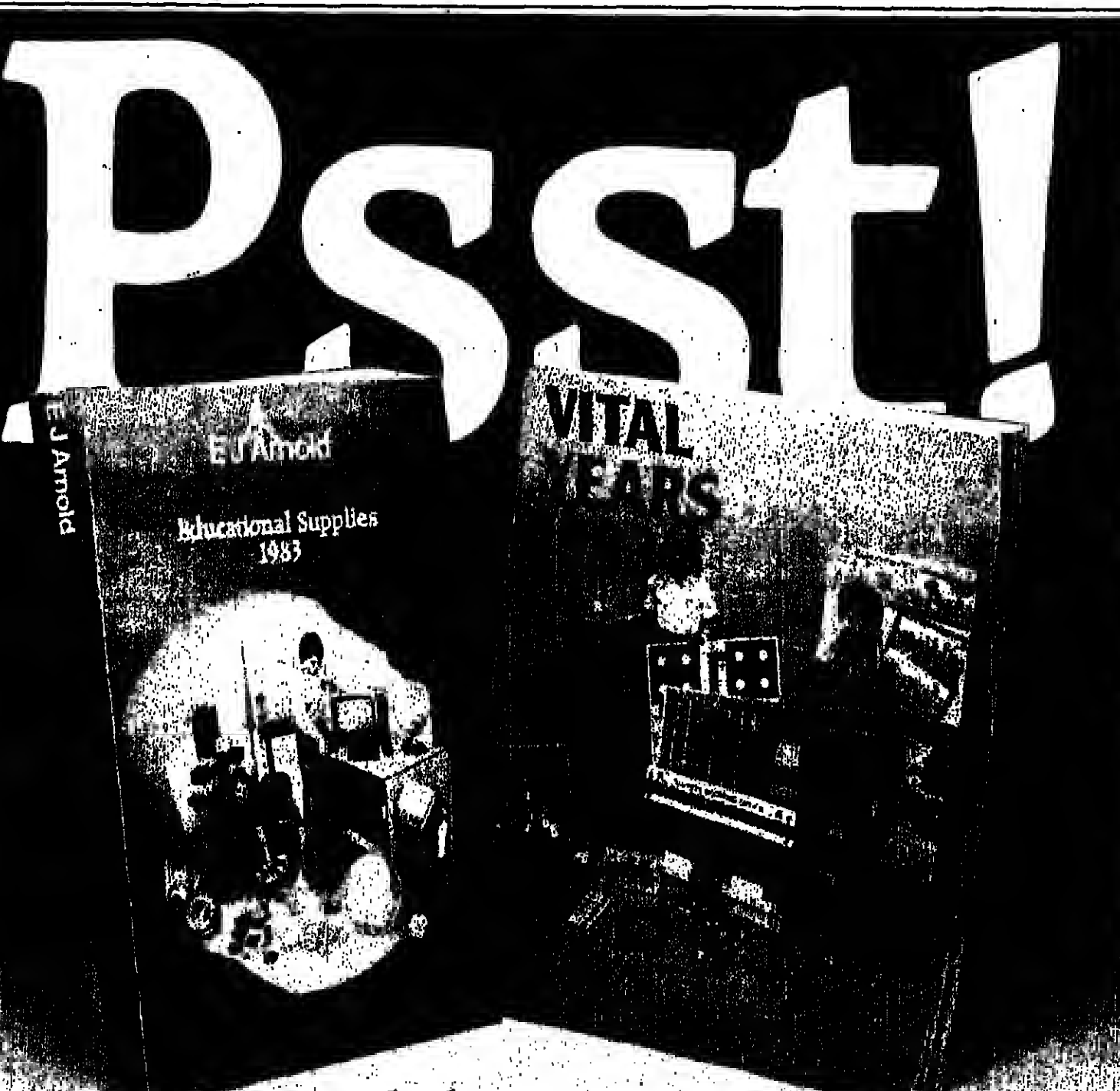
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- Four themes describe the minimum core - diversity of relationships between organisms and their environment; and maintenance of the continuity of life.

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## SPORT

David Budge reports on the FE goals Watford set for players and Sara Parker looks at Luton's YOP scheme.



## Looking ahead to the final whistle

Watford manager Graham Taylor is surprisingly self-effacing for a man who has led Elton John's football team up from the dungeons of the Fourth Division to the sunshine of the First.

"I had a grammar school education but I'm lacking in so many ways because I've always been involved in football, and that's a very narrow field," he says. "I feel it is vital that younger players should not make the mistake of abandoning their studies."

But over the past four years there has been little danger of that happening. For like some other enlightened league clubs, Watford have recruited a local headmaster, Barry Elliston, to double as their further education adviser.

Barry Elliston, who has the grand but rather nebulous title of education liaison officer, interviews and assesses the 16 to 18-year-old apprentices for placement on suitable FE courses and then monitors their progress. He also takes the new arrivals on a tough outdoor adventure course where they learn the simple truth that if they are to play well together they have to be mutually supportive.

Other duties include arranging work experience places for the professionals, often in sports shops, hotels and the motor trade, and maintaining contact with the 20 associate schoolboys - 14 to 16-year-olds who train with the club - and the schools they attend.

"School comes first and football second as far as the associate schoolboys are concerned," he says firmly. "I don't want boys saying they didn't do well at school because they were training with Watford. If someone doesn't like the line at school we take a very strong

stance." Barry Elliston, the 44-year-old head of Finchley Manorhill comprehensive in north London, played football for London University but maintains that he was no more than an "adequate park player". He became involved with Watford after one of his pupils was taken on as an associate schoolboy. In the event the boy was not signed but his headmaster, who had long been a Watford fan, was.

Initially, he was concerned with the four apprentices Graham Taylor brought to the club. "It was difficult at first for their attitude was that they had left education and that was that," Barry Elliston recalls.

But ultimately the struggle to convince them that they shouldn't rely solely on football proved an unequal one. For at Watford, at least as far as the apprentices are concerned, FE is not just recommended - it is



Barry Elliston and three of his charges: Garry Porter (front), Derek Williams (left) and Richard Jobson.

obligatory. "What you have to remember is that, even if you make the grade, at 31 or 32 the game gives you up - you don't give it up," is the message he is expected to put across.

This year 14 of the players (the club has a playing staff of 34) are studying at Watford and Cassio colleges or following work experience courses. Many are tackling O level maths. "I take the view that if a boy comes to us with say three O levels and doesn't have maths or English then he needs to get them," says Barry Elliston, who is himself a mathematician.

Several have also enrolled for the BEC general course which their mentor enthuses about. "It's not just a business education course and it's ideal for youngsters with CSE 3s and 4s. It allows them to handle money, write letters and learn about income tax. That's all very relevant to where they are now."

He had come to the club that day to talk to two of the apprentices, Garry Porter, 16, and Derek Williams, 17, who attended the same Sunderland comprehensive, and a 19-year-old junior professional, Richard Jobson, who left Nottingham University in October just as he was about to start the second year of a civil engineering course.

Garry is now taking a daytime O level maths course at Cassio and Derek is studying A level maths at Watford College. Richard's academic career is, however, in limbo. "The best thing I can probably do now is take an Open University course but the problem there is that you have to be 21 to enrol."

Richard has no regrets about joining Watford. "If I'd turned down their offer I would probably have regretted it for the rest of my life." But it does seem paradoxical that a club which stresses the importance of education should allow a teenager to abandon a university course.

Barry Elliston did not deny it. "Of course we could be accused of being inconsistent but young men do sometimes have to make some very hard decisions... the implications of his action were spelled out very clearly before he signed. I'm fairly confident though that the Open University will accept him at 20 rather than 21 as he's a special case."

Graham Taylor's deputy, the former Arsenal manager Bertie Mee,

has a clear conscience about the club's recruitment policy. "There have been occasions when we have refused to sign a boy if he's shown a great deal of academic ability. Incidentally, it's always felt there is a definite relationship between school and sporting success, at least as far as attitude and application is concerned."

Undoubtedly, part of the reason Mee and Taylor place so much emphasis on education is that it makes it easier for them to say farewell to an 18-year-old who has made the grade. "Perhaps only in 100 apprentices will they regret their first team football," Mee says.

But the FE programme is more than just a salve for bad consciences. As Bob Kerry, the former Professional Footballers' Association education officer who works for the club, says, "Education is very important for our players. It's not just a matter of the Football League, it's a matter of the club's view of their responsibilities to their managers."

"I would estimate that only 10 of the country's 2,700 professional footballers are involved in FE of some form of productive training. The industry makes a player think short term, particularly if he's with a club that is on the up, but it's fallacy that players are cash in on their time when they retire."

Barry Elliston agrees that most of the club's senior professionals do not show enough interest in education. "Many of them wait until the end of their careers and then do a course in business management, law and accountancy. I think some of them come to regret the years when they had so much time on their hands."

The United States Department of Defense runs a £268m-a-year school system for the children of military families posted overseas. It maintains 270 schools in 20 countries for 500,000 pupils, making it the twelfth largest school system in the world, out of the United States.

In this country there are Department of Defence Dependents' schools (DoDDS) in 17 places, mostly on bases in East Anglia and central England. Most are primary schools.

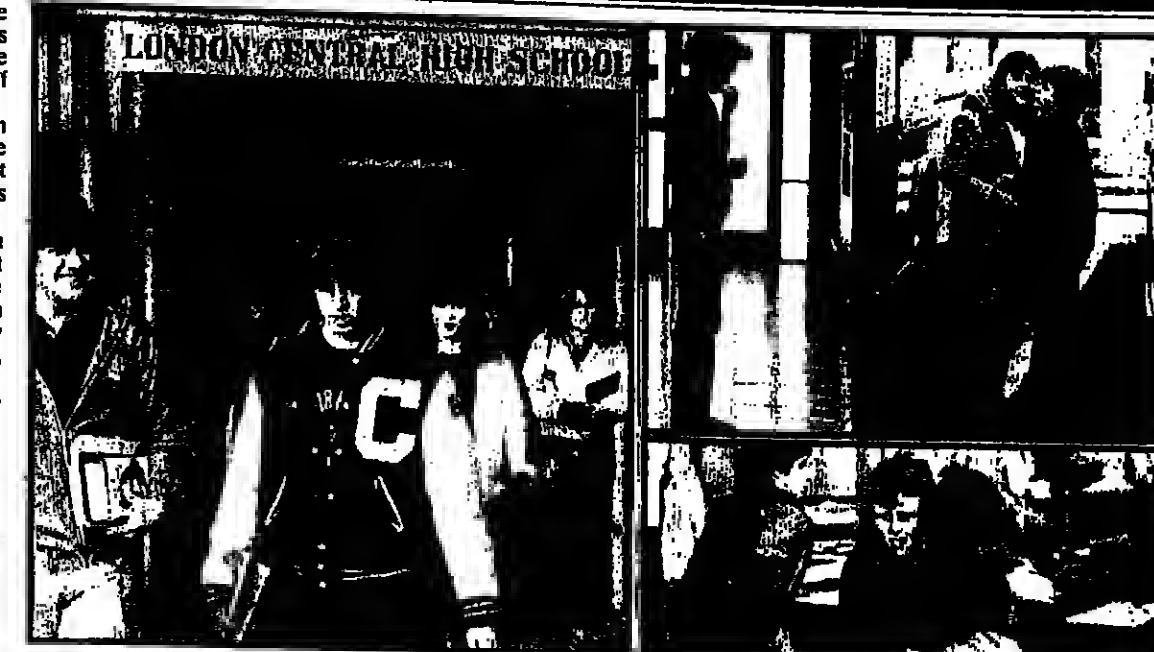
There are five high schools - at Lakenheath, Lakenheath, Woodbridge and High Wycombe. The schools are funded and run by the Pentagon, but teaching staff have been to emphasize their educational independence from the military. The schools are inspected and

accredited by the biggest US accrediting agency, and there is no military interference in the curriculum.

Unlike "Stateside" schools - pupils and teachers use military jargon as a matter of course - the overseas schools have absolutely no worry about funds. High schools can also offer wide-ranging vocational work experience placements, using opportunities on the bases. Parents in closed military communities tend to get actively involved with the schools, "and all our parents are employed", Dr Seligman points out.

Perhaps as a result of these advantages, pupils achieve better results than their Stateside counterparts. For the past seven years, high school seniors in schools maintained by the Pentagon have scored higher than seniors back home.

Other reasons given for the suc-



## Uncle Sam's children

**Though anti-nuclear protests at Britain's US bases are proliferating, the service children seem oblivious to the storm inside. Report by Hilary Willes.**

accredited by the biggest US accrediting agency, and there is no military interference in the curriculum.

Other reasons given for the suc-

At Lakenheath's huge elementary school, where more than 1,300 children go quietly about their schooling, there is a turnover of about a third of the pupils each year. The school is well used to this coming and going, and administrators a complicated mixture of special educational programmes for its shifting population. All manner of children, from the severely mentally and physically handicapped to the gifted, are carefully catered for in the lavishly-equipped building. "In our experience the children adapt very well", Mr Richard Miller, the elementary school headmaster, says.

All the schools exist as small fragments of American on foreign soil. The pupils eat hamburgers and play basketball. The girls compete to become cheerleaders, complete with drum majorette-style uniforms and

paper pom-poms. Older pupils study "auto shop" (car mechanics) and "cosmetology" (hair dressing). In spite of the presence of "host nation advisers" who arrange field trips and lectures, the schools remain apart from the country in which they are based. Pupils, and often teachers, remain surprisingly ignorant of British affairs, according to one English teacher working in a base school.

The small air base at High Wycombe recently hit the headlines when it was revealed to be location of American wartime European command headquarters. For the present, however, it remains a small, if important, military installation numerically swamped by pupils who attend the London Central High School, which has its home in the base's tatty collection of wartime huts and barracks.

The school is secluded, almost eerily cut off from passing traffic, but its catchment area stretches halfway round the globe. Of the 500 pupils, 230 are boarders. They come from families who are posted to countries in the Eastern Block, or to far-flung places like Antigua and Honduras, or from bases in the United Kingdom which do not offer secondary education.

Many of these pupils have high-ranking fathers, and the school's ability range is skewed towards the upper end. Last year 41 per cent of leavers went on to four-year college places. A significant 13 per cent went on into the armed forces.

No matter where in the world they grow up, the children of America's military personnel are assured a sound American education. The system expands and contracts on the military machine dictates. This year Lakenheath's elementary school is several hundred pupils down on its expected intake. Teachers hired locally for the start of the school year had to be summarily dismissed. But there are plans to expand the elementary school at Woodbridge and, as reported on page one, to build a big new school at Greenham Common.

## YTS signs on with the soccer clubs

experience in office and ground work in a six-day week, one day of which will be spent on further education at a college.

The scheme will be managed by the Footballers' Further Education and Vocational Training Society.

Merging soccer apprenticeship with the YTS appears set to require compromises and trade-offs that will not be made. The clubs already accept an obligation to provide day release for those apprentices who want it; and the prospect of taking on more school-leavers than can possibly be given meaningful jobs does not invite serious thought with a conscience. Only one in three of the traditional apprenticeship intake makes it into adult professional football anyway.

Mark Jackson

the scrap heap. And in these days of high unemployment, it would be morally indefensible.

The YOP scheme was first suggested by the Luton careers office nearly three years ago. So far five youngsters have been given a chance under the scheme.

And all of them would normally never have been considered for Luton Town. For example, Mark Watts, 17, would have been turned down because of his size - he is a small framed 5' 8". Now he has been signed up.

Michael Shearer, also 17, was too late even for a trial when he wrote to the club. The two available apprentice places had already been filled. At the end of six months on the scheme, he is now waiting to see if he will also be signed up. If not he will return to school to take his A levels.

Only two out of the five have so far failed to make the grade. One, after a year's unemployment, has found work in a store, the other has returned to full-time education.

But even in the face of such disappointments, Colin Ball, maintaining "it is better than if they had come to the club for two years, only to be dropped at 18 when they would find it more difficult to return to full-time education or get a job."

Those chosen for the scheme have to compete against the 90 or so other youngsters who every year come for trials with the club. Many are associate schoolboys, which means they have been signed up with a club since the age of 14. All are above average players, and keen.

Michael Shearer said: "Every kid thinks he wants to be a professional footballer until he gets turned down."



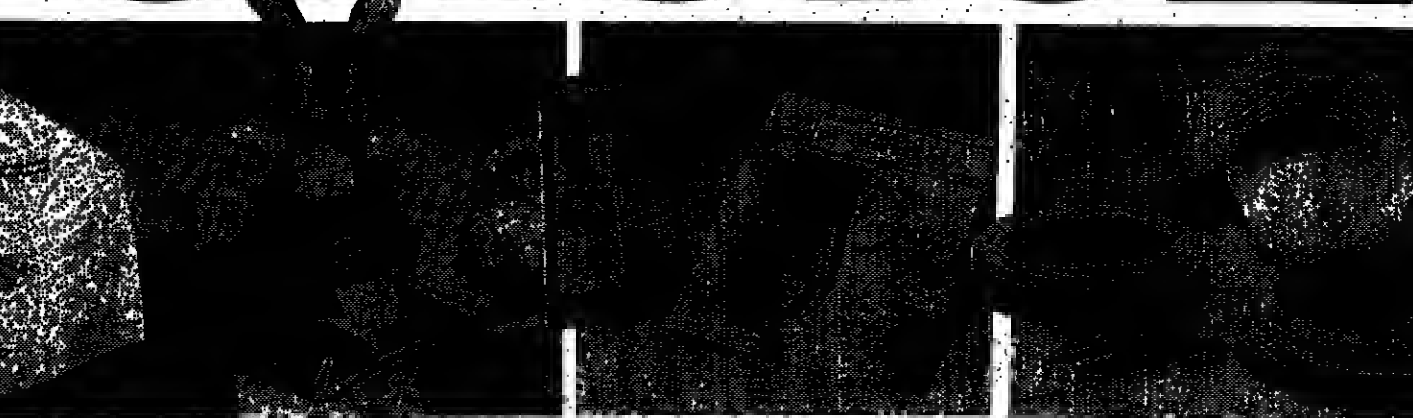
Mark Watts would have been rejected on the grounds that he was too small.

I was just one of the lads who had a dream of being a professional footballer. But the scheme has its drawbacks. Luton captain Brian Horton believes that he would have found it himself. "It's difficult as a young apprentice, playing with full-time professionals when you look up to. You have to be very mature to cope with those kind of pressures."

Youth coach John Moore agrees;

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TES/18/2/83

## Opportunity knocks for the dole queue footballers

One of Luton Town's most promising young footballers would probably be in the dole queue now if it hadn't been for the Youth Opportunities Programme.

Mitchell Thomas left school at 16 with no qualifications and a reputation for being a difficult youngster. His only skill was football.

Colin Ball, the club's youth development officer, recalls: "Normally we wouldn't have taken a lad like Mitchell. He didn't have the right temperament or background." At professional level the stakes are high and we can't afford a prima donna. We look for temperament as well as footballing talent.

Within three months Mitchell - as he has been nicknamed by his fellow players - had signed on as an apprentice. This season, with his eighteenth birthday, he became a professional with the club and has played in five first team matches.

Luton, promoted to the First Di-

Mitchell Thomas: his only skill was football.

vision this season, rely on good young players working their way up through the ranks. But as the recession bites deeper, they admit to having been forced to offer fewer and fewer opportunities for youngsters who want to prove themselves on the football pitch.

In better days, the club would have taken on at least five apprentices a year. Now the maximum is three. The apprenticeship between the ages of 16 and 18 costs an estimated £5,000 for each youngster - and only one or two are signed on as professionals at the end of the two years.

Colin Ball, a former teacher, explains: "It matters if we miss a good boy. But we can't afford to take on 10 boys, only to put seven back on

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New DES statistics confirm that youth unemployment has placed an increasingly heavy burden on schools and colleges since 1973. Report by Biddy Passmore.

## Jobless girls retreat back to the classroom

More girls than boys have reacted to shrinking job opportunities by staying on in full-time education according to the latest statistics from the Department of Education. However, girls tend to take shorter courses than the boys who stay on.

The figures show that unemployment among 16-year-olds has risen at roughly the same rate for boys and girls since 1973. But, of those not on the unemployment register, boys are now much more likely than girls to have jobs, while girls are more likely to stay on at school or college.

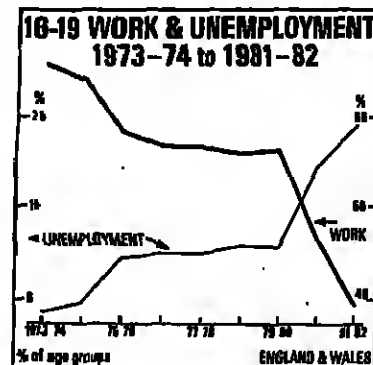
For many girls, full-time education appears to be the only way to continue their studies beyond 16. Girls seldom get jobs with opportunities for part-time study, perhaps for that reason, a higher percentage of girls than boys take evening classes.

These are some of the main conclusions to be drawn from the department's latest statistical bulletin, which traces education and employment trends among young people since 1973.

It shows that schools and colleges have absorbed a massive increase in 16 to 19-year-old students over the past eight years. The number in full-time and sandwich education rose from 527,000 (26 per cent of the age group) in 1973-74 to 712,000 (29 per cent) by 1981-82, to around 780,000 (31 per cent) in 1981-82.

But the most striking figures reveal the growing gap between the educational participation of boys and girls. In the autumn of 1973, the proportion of 16-year-olds boys opting to stay on at school or college was 34 per cent - just 3 per cent below the girls' figure. But by the autumn of 1981 there was a marked difference, with 43 per cent of boys staying on compared with more than half (53 per cent) of girls.

The difference was greatest in further education, where the boys' participation rate rose from 8 to only 13 per cent while the girls' nearly doubled, from 11 to 20 per cent. But boys' participation started to pick up in 1981-82, as the squeeze on jobs got tighter, suggesting that the gap may close again.



There was a corresponding trend in employment. In 1973-74, nearly two-thirds of both boys and girls had jobs at 16. By 1981-82, only one-third of boys and less than a quarter of girls were in employment. The proportion registered as unemployed rose from 5 to 15 per cent for boys and from 3 to 14 per cent for girls over the same period.

Of those between their sixteenth and nineteenth birthdays in 1981-82, 31 per cent were in full-time or sandwich education and a further 17 per cent had some part-time study or training by day, either on job release, or through the Youth

Opportunities Programme.

The biggest change between January 1981 and January 1982 was a drop of seven percentage points (from 52 to 45 per cent) in the proportion of those with jobs. This was almost matched by a 2 per cent increase in the numbers staying on in full-time education, a 1 per cent increase in the numbers on YOP and a 3 per cent rise in unemployment.

Although in 1981-82 more girls than boys stayed on at school or college, by the age of 18 the percentages were similar, mainly because boys tended to take longer courses than girls.

A higher proportion of boys than girls obtained day release from employment, with the difference getting more marked by ages 17 and 18. By age 17, 10 per cent more girls than boys were in a job where they had no opportunity to study during the day. By age 18, the difference was 20 per cent.

DES Statistical Bulletin 2/83, *Educational and Economic Activity of Young People aged 16 to 19 years in England and Wales from 1973-74 to 1981-82*, can be obtained from the Statistics Branch, Elizabeth House, York Road, London SE1 7PH.

## Small rise in number of 16-year-olds staying on

Figures to be released shortly by the DES are expected to show only a very small rise in the number of 16-year-olds staying on at school last autumn. The increase over the previous year could be as small as 2,000.

This follows a big jump of 20,000 in the autumn of 1981, probably caused by a sudden squeeze in job opportunities. It is not yet clear why there was not a similar rise last autumn.

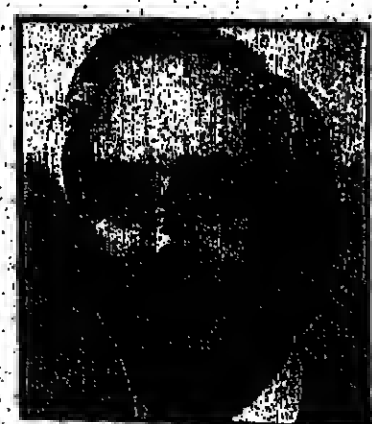
Many 16-year-olds may have opted for further education rather than school but national figures for the colleges will not be available until the summer. In Hampshire, for example, the number staying on at

school remained the same last year while the number going on to full-time further education rose by 15 per cent.

The forthcoming figures are also expected to show that most of the extra first year sixth-formers did not stay on for a second year. It appears that very few of the extra 20,000 stayers-on in 1981 have entered the second year sixth.

This confirms a trend apparent over the past four or five years, when the numbers staying on at school have continued to rise but the proportion of those leaving school with one or more A levels has stayed roughly constant at 15 per cent.

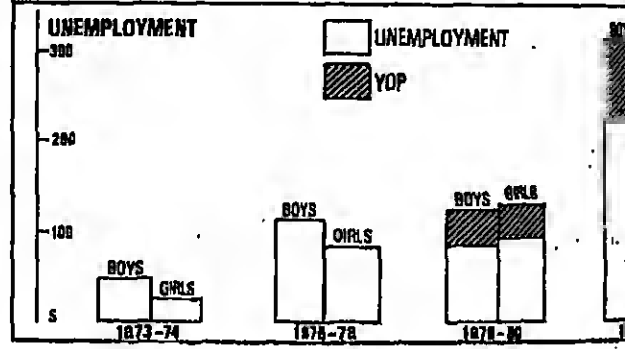
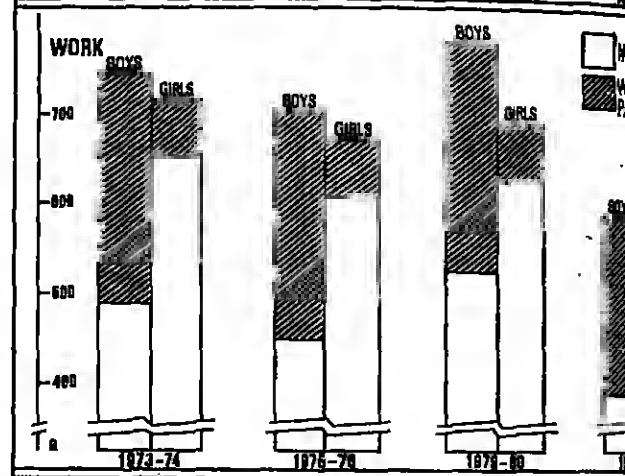
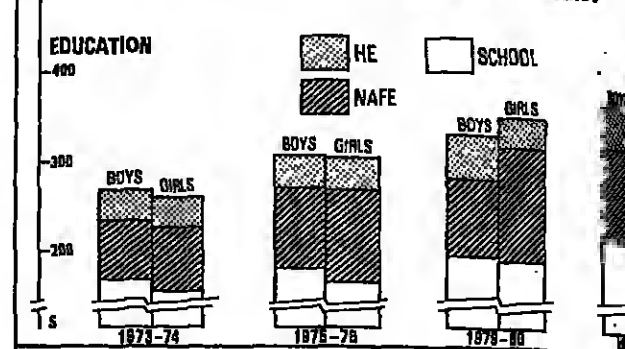
## SCHOOL TO WORK



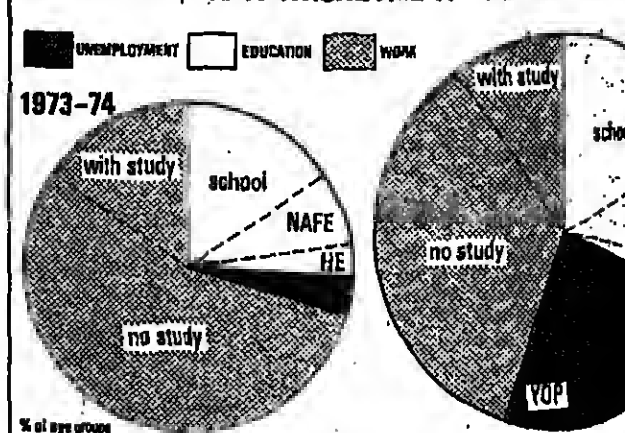
David Young

At a recent press conference the commission's chairman, Mr David Young, claimed that the number of places already offered by local authorities and voluntary agencies, or being negotiated with them, showed that the programme was well on the way to achieving its target. But he was unable to give the number of places being filled and his official figures are refusing to disclose the figure. It is understood that this is building up to only a fraction of the monthly target.

16-19s PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION, WORK OR UNEMPLOYMENT



16-19 WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



## Teachers urged to back technical studies scheme

The TUC's education chief will today appeal to teachers to make the Government's plan to bring technical education back into the schools work properly. He fears that otherwise it could end in what selectivity still exists.

Mr Roy Jackson, TUC education secretary, will tell the National Union of Teachers secondary conference at Stoke Rochford that educationists on the programme's steering group are trying to build in safeguards against its use to prop up selective education. But the group, of which he is a member, will have to rely on teachers in the end, he says.

Mr Jackson told the TES this week: "I shall be telling the conference that all the safeguards we thought have been built into the MSC criteria for the programme, but it will still depend particularly on teachers whether the scheme benefits young people or simply relieves

## IN BRIEF

### Bound for Falklands

Seven teachers are to take up posts in the Falkland Islands under the British aid programme later this month. About half the education posts in the Falklands are supported by British overseas aid, which tops locally-paid salaries.

The new batch of teachers includes a maths and an English specialist. Several have said they are leaving because of stress and poor promotion prospects at home.

### Drop in crime

Crime among younger children may be falling, according to figures in the latest *Annual Abstract of Statistics*. It shows that in England and Wales the number of boys aged 10 to 14 found guilty of more serious offences fell from 19,200 in 1977 to 14,000 in 1981, with a corresponding drop among girls from 2,500 to 1,800. The number found guilty of less serious offences also fell slightly.

Based on Abstract of Statistics 1983, HMSO £17.50.

### Old friends

The Aged has launched a competition for schools which is designed to bring pensioners and schoolchildren closer together.

The school that devises the best method of promoting greater understanding between the two age groups will win a £1,000 first prize set up by Leaper and General, the nation's firm. Eight regional prizes will also be awarded.

Schools interested should contact "Side", Help the Aged Education Department, 318 St John's Road, London, N1.

### Welsh grants

Twenty projects to foster Welsh education are to be given grants by the Government next year. The successful projects were chosen from 143 submitted by local education authorities, and most of the rest to the Welsh Education Committee and for further education.

### E.a. inquiry

An internal inquiry into the organisation and administration of a special school is being conducted in the London borough of Merton. Mrs Elizabeth Miles, head of St Ann's special school, has been suspended from full pay since the beginning of the inquiry, the results of the inquiry are being kept secret.

### No secrets

Teachers are being encouraged to make a secret of the results of the latest letter-writing competition. Regional winners will receive a National Savings certificate worth £100. The winners will be chosen from a list of three prizes of £100 each, plus a National Savings certificate worth £100. Further details available from all post offices.

### UGC advice

The University Grants Committee has set up a working party to give advice on how to develop continuing education in the universities. The working party, which will be chaired by Sir Stuart Johnson, director of the Higher Education Council, is expected to report to the committee within a year. It has not yet been decided whether its report will be published.

## Royal Society of Arts

## EDUCATION FOR CAPABILITY

There is a serious imbalance in Britain today in the full process which is described by the two words 'education' and 'training'. The idea of the 'educated person' is that of a scholarly individual who has been neither educated nor trained to exercise useful skills; who is able to understand but not to act. Young people in secondary or higher education increasingly specialise, and do so too often in ways which mean that they are taught to practise only the skills of scholarship and science. They acquire knowledge of particular subjects, but are not equipped to use knowledge ways in which are relevant to the world outside the education system.

This imbalance is harmful to individuals, to industry and to society. A well-balanced education should, of course, embrace analysis and the acquisition of

knowledge. But it must also include the exercise of creative skills, the competence to undertake and complete tasks and the ability to cope with everyday life; and also doing all these things in co-operation with others.

There exists in its own right a culture which is concerned with doing, making and organising and the creative arts. This culture emphasises the day to day management of affairs, the formulation and solution of problems and the design, manufacture and marketing of goods and services.

Educators should spend more time preparing people in this way for a life outside the education system. The country would benefit significantly in economic terms from what is here described as Education for Capability.

The foregoing manifesto, originally published by the Royal Society of Arts in the national press in 1980, and now appearing with minor amendments, has the support of:

Betty Adams, Kenneth Adams, Sir Campbell Adamson, Robert Aitken, Lord Alexander, Lindsay Anderson, Susan Andrews, M A Anson, Prof. Bruce Archer, Sir Ove Arup, Prof. John Ashworth, Lord Asquith, Lord Asquith, Prof. Lord Baker, Sir Peter Baldwin, Prof. J Ball, Correll Barnes, Sir Donald Barron, Stephen Bayley, Lord Besant, Sir Terence Beckett, C M Bedford, Ellen Bell, Rt Hon. Lord Bewick, David Beith, Michael Berr, Dr C W L Bevan, T H Bewan, Tom Blumenthal, Stephen Briggs, D Brooking, Prof. Daphne Brooker, Rt Hon. Lord George-Brown, Lord Brown, Sir Arthur Bryson, Tyrrell Burgess, Raymond Burton, Sir Adrian Cadbury, Sir Alec Cairncross, Viscount Caldecote, J Camden, Sherpan Cantacuzio, Rt Hon. Lord Carr, David Carter, Terry Casey, Lady Casson, Geoffrey Chandler, Frank Chapple, C V Chamber-Brown, Sir Henry Chilver, Demetrius Conino, Sir Terence Conran, Sir Kenneth Corfield, Patrick Cormack MP, Peter Cox, Rt Hon. Lord Craig, David Crouch MP, Prof. Sir Samuel Curran, Dr. Duncan Davies, N Oliver Davies, Peter Dawson, Rt Hon. Edmund Dell, H J Dunster, Rt Hon. Viscount Eccles, Alan Eden-Green, Sir Michael Edwards, Dr. R G Edwards, Dr. Charles Elliott, Glyn England, A N Fairbairn, Sebastian de Ferranti, Sir Monty Finniston, Jean Flood, Lord Flowers, Michael Forde, Michael Forman, Prof. Peter Forrester, Norman Foster, Sir Campbell Fraser, Prof. Christopher Freeman, Dr. E A Freeman, A P Frodsham, Sir Peter Gaden, Maurice Goldsmith, G T Goodall, Peter Gordon, Annette Gordon, S T Graham, Keith Grant, Roy Greenham, Harry Greenway MP, A H C Greenwood, Lord Gregson, Prof. Sir George Grenfell-Baines, Michael Haines, G R Hall, Sir Peter Hall, Prof. Charles Hardy, Prof. Sir Alan Harris, Dame Diana Reade Harris, G M A Hartless, R Haslam, Prof. John Heath, R L Holmore, Prof. Peter Herriot, B J Hill, St John Hill, Dr. Graham Hills, Prof. F H Hingley, C A Hogg, G V Holroyde, Dr. J H Horlock, F H Howarth, Prof. Liam Hudson, T C Hudson, Ian Hueter.

## RECOGNITION SCHEME 1983

The Society is promoting Education for Capability in a number of ways. One of these is to run its Recognition Scheme, now in its fourth year.

The purpose of the Scheme is to identify, encourage and publicise educational programmes designed to help people, whether school pupils, students or adults, to learn how to live and work more effectively. Applications will be welcomed both from all parts of the education system, and

from public and voluntary bodies and industrial and commercial enterprises, from within the United Kingdom.

If you wish to seek Recognition from the Society for a programme which aims at the objectives of Education for Capability, please write for particulars of the Scheme (for which the closing date is 29 April 1983) to: Timothy Cantell, Education for Capability, Royal Society of Arts, John Adam Street, Adelphi, London WC2N 6EZ.

Mathematical Modelling unit in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Teesside Polytechnic; the Communication of Scientific Ideas course in the Department of Humanities at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London; the Development of University English Teaching (DUBET) project at the University of East Anglia; the Properties of Materials course in the Department of Civil Engineering at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh; the Personal Development programme for Production Managers in the Collaborative Studies Unit at the University of Salford; the Integrated Degree course in Electrical/Electronic Engineering instigated by GEC-Marconi Electronics, Chesham, Essex; Development Training at the Brathay Hall Trust, Cumbria; and the New Work Ventures course at Project Fullemplay Clerkenwell, London. Five of the seventeen projects recognised by the Society were given small grants totalling £2,000.

## Unions to retain work project veto

Manpower Services Commission officials have abandoned their plan to override union objections to projects under the Community Programme, the Government work scheme for the over-18s.

The officials, senior managers in the commission's employment services division, had decided that the time had come to challenge the principle that wherever unions have an interest in a project their approval is required. The principle has been observed up to now in all MSC schemes.

The disclosure by the TES last month of an internal MSC paper which stated that unions must no longer be allowed to veto a project - and also explored possible ways of embarrassing local authorities who were slow to cooperate in the Community Programme - has resulted in top level protests to the commission

from the unions and voluntary organisations involved in the scheme. TUC officials were particularly incensed by an allegation in the paper that they had given their behind-the-scenes blessing to the new policy.

This week the TUC's employment policy committee were told that the commission's officials have given up the idea of challenging the veto and will not go ahead with projects if a union with a direct interest objects.

The official in charge of the programme, Mr J B Surr, has apologized profusely for the misrepresentation of the TUC's position in the internal paper, and admits that its officials never sanctioned any change in the procedure. The whole incident is seen in union quarters and by the voluntary agencies as evidence of some backsliding in the commission at the slow progress of the programme.







LETTERS

Lightening science exam syllabuses



Cost of a baby

Sir - Whilst I agree that the position regarding maternity leave presents enormous difficulties to those making staffing arrangements, I have a great deal of sympathy for the expectant mothers.

Ms Maden and myself are two very good examples of the extremes of the situation. We both went to university together (Leeds 1958) and then went in to teaching. I went in to FE, and had I been able to take maternity leave I could have expected to be senior lecturer or head of department.

As it was I was able to find part-time employment "holding the fort" at local village infant and junior schools when teachers were ill, etc. I am not complaining, I enjoyed it, and my own experience as a parent was invaluable. In time I moved in to part-time work in secondary schools and eventually full-time work.

Now that I would like a position of more responsibility I am told that I am too old, and that I should already have held a higher position. It is galling to see a young mother walk off with the job you wanted, but from someone who tried to "get back in" at the ripe old age of 30 and spent 10 years in the educational wilderness, my advice is "go ahead, you take maternity leave but I say it reluctantly, because I think you should be able to spend some time bringing up your own children without forfeiting all your career prospects.

ROSEMARY EVANS  
46 Ryefields  
Scholes  
Huddersfield

Coed curriculum

Sir - Great as is my respect for Mrs Pauline Mathias, the new president of the Girls' Schools Association, I must ask for justification of her statement (TES, January 28) that girls are too often restricted in coeducational schools to the conventional girls' subjects.

One of the most important features in my own school and in the group of some 50 HMC schools which are now fully coeducational is the availability of all subjects and facilities to both boys and girls; this is indeed one of the cornerstones of our policy.

Judging by the confidence generated in the girls in our schools, the policy seems to be working well.

DEREK PENNBR  
Headmaster  
Alley's School  
Dulwich

Sir - I read with great interest your January 28 editorial on the Royal Society's report, "Science Education 11 to 18", and was glad that you regard it as a contribution to the wider agreement which is obviously needed.

You rightly point out that more needs to be done, notably in the preparation of detailed proposals on what should be left out to lighten the load of current science examination syllabuses. There can be no doubt that this is a central issue, but the responsibility for initiating the exercise needed to establish agreement, and for the implementation of it, must lie with the DES, the examination boards, and particularly with the new Examinations Council.

I believe that the Royal Society can and will contribute to this task, but it can do so most effectively in parallel with other bodies, especially teachers and local education authorities, who can bring a wide range of experience and expertise to it.

On a different point, I must ask you to correct a misquotation (one word) in your article which is particularly unfortunate and damaging, in that it reverses the sense of a crucial part of the argument. You quote (paragraph 0.15) "science's abstractness is the very quality that gives it such enormous power and range of application". This is, of course, utter nonsense because, as the report emphasizes, science is about real things and events in the real world, and nothing could be more concrete. The correct version has "mathematics in place of science, and then the statement is not only true but basic to any genuine understanding of the way in which mathematics is applied to science and technology and other aspects of the real world.

H R PITT  
Chairman  
Royal Society Education Committee  
6 Carlton House Terrace  
London SW1

Experts required

Sir - It is unfortunate that from both articles appearing in your issue of January 28 concerning the report of the Royal Society study group "Science Education 11-18" (together with the infectious paragraph quoted in "No Comment") readers may gain the impression of yet another unrealistic academic exercise which can safely be ignored by

teachers, educational advisers and administrators. The report itself requires considerable reading time but the "Report in summary" (not mentioned in your articles) gives a lucid account of the pressures on the science curriculum in schools, problems inherent in the option system with consequent implications for employment and higher education, and the implications of the Royal Society recommendations themselves for extra resources and the provision of more science teachers.

The emphasis in the report on "separate science courses in the three sciences, at least for the more able pupils," (my italics) is not only concerned with the maintenance of the status quo. It is based firmly on the study group's opinion that "good teaching is given by good, expert and enthusiastic teachers". As a chemist, once able to communicate some of the fascination of chemistry to pupils of a wide range of ability and able also to follow up some of their own interests, queries and original ideas, I was all too conscious of lacking these qualities when teaching physics or (even worse) biology. How often do pupils' interest and enthusiasm suffer through

a pedantic or pedestrian approach from specialist "science" teachers cautiously presenting their non-specialist subject? There are teachers (and the report recognizes this) who do successfully teach integrated science in 16-plus; these, it is claimed, are a rare breed who should be allowed to continue this approach. For the majority of science teachers why should this valuable resource for subject specialists not be utilized in the way which they can best serve their pupils?

The references in the report to "marginally reduced syllabuses" for pupils of O level ability certainly reflect a lack of control with the realities of secondary school life. A decrease of 75 per cent of present teaching time for each science subject will inevitably entail a considerable reduction in content however well "coordinated" the teaching by the three subject specialists. This reduction of familiar subject content will be the more necessary since the report recommends that the applicability of science and the social and economic effects of such application should be stressed, areas of content often lacking from current O level syllabuses.

Suggestions for the content of these "slim-line" syllabuses may well come from the appropriate joint education committees. A close reading of the recommendations for the national criteria for 16-plus chemistry suggests that these could provide a basis for discussion for this subject.

Some areas of the section on ideas, models, patterns and theories could be deepened in order to cater for the "challenge and achievement" levels of the more able. The technological applications and contributions of chemistry to the economic and environmental health of society are already explicitly included. Working from such a base-line and given the experience and sound judgment of teachers on the subject panels of the examination board the danger that syllabuses could shrink to a dense (and irreducible) core can be avoided.

FRANCESCA OARFORTH  
Leverhulme Research Fellow  
151 Newland Park  
Hull

Politics ignored

Sir - The Royal Society may urge more study of science (TES, January 28) through the separate disciplines, but do the compilers of the

report suggest which areas of school curriculum should be cut to accommodate this? Is the cause for more and separate science the teaching methodology? Science is unique and this is a modern technological age. Scientific education is a more holistic statement is relevant to quarters of the world's 11 year-old children.

For decades, children have told that they are living in a "conflict age", no doubt the chief of the front of the research in pure science education by Royal Society.

It would be folly not to agree science is fundamental to our curriculum. However, two thoughts always come to mind. I hear science teachers agree more curriculum time.

First, surely scientific thought enquiry transgresses the boundaries of other subjects and therefore what extent has the school curriculum been designed to enhance experiences of science outside laboratory situation?

Secondly, the application of science to society has no technological only political ones. We are a product of the political and systems in which we live, yet the debate for, not increasing, merely insulating the social economics and politics to year-olds?

Perhaps the absence of study is due to fear of the established values of Science, within the bounds of scientific knowledge, politics and economic life, having factual elements, much opinion, in the broadest of the world.

Children should become aware of the economic and political advice on where, in the future, to wield my axe for the slon?

GEORGE J WALLACE  
Head of the Faculty of  
Hounslow Manor School  
Prince Regent Road  
Hounslow, Middlesex

Letters for publication should be kept as brief as possible and on one side of the paper only. Editor reserves the right to amend them.

Bold decision to expand training

Sir - Mark Jackson (TES, February 4) seems to portray us as wreckers of the Youth Training Scheme and of the TUC. I hope this is wrong; indeed we are convinced we are strengthening the scheme and have no conflict between our aims and those of the constituent unions of the National Joint Council.

Warwickshire Garage and Transport Group Training Association is 33 members strong. Because of the recession our joint intake of school leavers has dwindled into insignificance. Last year only six apprentices were recruited and this year, unfortunately, we could expect no more, though to sustain even the most basic training provision in local education. A significant initiative to reverse the trend is overdue.

Our members have taken the bold decision to expand our training opportunities for school leavers, and over the last year, with the aid of YTS mode A, Not in itself very remarkable, but in this case each employer-sponsor has undertaken to "top-up" the YTS grant by £500 per trainee per year, in order to maintain minimum laid down by YTS mode A. Our target is Road Transport and Industry Training Board stage 1, but broadened to embrace the YTS criteria.

It is the principle of "topping-up" that we see as significant; the only way of providing a worthwhile training and further education for all participants, in the numbers required for viability. "Topping-up" produces an extra commitment from the project from the sponsors, we hope, from the trainees; and

that should result in better-than-average placement into related employment at the end of the year. Not quite a silk purse, but a worthwhile improvement on the proverbial sow's ear.

I am grateful to Mark Jackson for drawing attention to the possible issue of apprentices' pay. There are many difficulties we have to surmount in designing our scheme, but undermining the NJC is definitely not on our agenda. If a YTS trainee signs indentures while on our scheme he becomes entitled to apprentice pay rates forthwith. We hope that many trainees will become formally apprentices at some stage (and our existing NJC agreement permits backdating of apprenticeship to the start of any relevant training).

As YTS trainees, the remainder will enjoy tax and National Insurance exemptions that reduce the apparent gap. All will gain the benefit of a considerable widening of opportunities for school leavers that could not occur without the intervention of the Manpower Services Commission scheme, deficient though it may be in some respects.

Our role as managing agents is not to regulate or influence the pay of bona fide apprentices. As our MSC spokesman correctly stressed, there are well-established and effective collective bargaining arrangements that apply, and it is a matter for participating employer-sponsors to resolve in the light of existing agreements.

O M LOCOCK  
Training Officer  
Warwickshire Garage and Transport Group Training Association  
Leamington Spa

Religious apartheid

Sir - You report (TES February 4) that Ulster's education minister told the Select Committee on Education that the religious element in Ulster's schools was one reason why the schoolchildren performed better than in other parts of the UK. On what evidence did he base this assertion?

He also said that the religious element "influenced their whole attitude to work and life". There is certainly ample empirical evidence that it contributes to intolerant attitudes and behaviour. This should not surprise us, for three reasons:

1. Religious apartheid in education - separate schools for Protestants and Catholics and, in due course, no doubt for Rastafarians and Muslims - inevitably produces effects similar to those of racial apartheid.

2. Tolerance depends, *inter alia*, on the cultivation of an unbiased questioning attitude, the opposite to the religious approach.

3. Doctrinaire belief systems (religious or political), with their inflexible authorities and sacred writings, inevitably foster the concept of

heresy, and thus intolerance and persecution - even if such systems are inspired by concern for one's fellow humans. This is borne out, eg, by the appalling histories of Christianity and Marxism.

Moreover, the unsubstantiated claims made by protagonists of religious indoctrination deflect attention from the desperate need for competent education in human relations, based on an understanding of the psychological and social roots of morality. Perhaps the recent recognition of the British Humanist Association as an educational charity may lead to greater recognition of this need.

In Ulster in particular, secularization of the education system appears to be an essential prerequisite for an eventual solution of its social and political problems.

If any doubt remains about the evidence, why not ask the National Foundation for Educational Research to carry out an impartial survey of the research literature on the effects of RE?

RICHARD BENJAMIN  
11 Arnos Grove  
London

Seeing red

Sir - In case no due springs to our defence, I may I assure Mr Alfred Watkins "Charybdis and I know our parts of speech, as well as our metres" (Letters, January 28).

Shakespeare took a "perfectly good adjective, intransitive, and, in fact, a verb, and used it as a noun; I merely reverted to the original meaning. (See *The Shorter Oxford Dictionary*).

The Palace has put his foot in it: an "adjective" of English philology (1) teachers that the pupils (and teachers) of Ousevalle School have more rewarding paths to tread; (2) we also sure that they will recede; (3) another reference, to "Mocmone" the one that begins "Creeps in the pretty Palace".

ALAN PROUD  
30 Ryeford Road  
Barnet  
Herts

College mix

Sir - I am sorry that Dr Judge, in his otherwise fair review of Peter Watkins' "Sixth-form college in practice" (TES, January 28) should have given the impression that, on the whole, colleges are reflections of previous grammar schools: institutions whose titles conceal "presuppositions... about the creation and maintenance of elites" and, lo choosing to highlight the 10 per cent of sixth-form colleges Oxford applicants in 1983 should neglect to comment on the extensive work now being done - and described in Watkins' book as being done - for many who are in no way academic.

Most sixth-form colleges, even when they sprang from grammar schools, soon developed a more liberal approach to sixth-form education than was ever present in selective schools, and some are now lacking the whole range of ability at 16 (including ESN pupils). The so-

Pre-school debate

Sir - There has been an item and some correspondence about our research on innovation in provision for pre-school children. I had no intention of entering this correspondence since we have not yet presented the evidence and I believe that we should be working together to improve our rather than arguing about points of unestablished detail. However there seems to be a need for clarification on some matters reported in your pages.

The Pre-school Evaluation Project involved case studies of a number of schemes in various parts of Britain. These projects were selected for study from over 80 originally considered and the selection was approved by the Social Science Research Council which invited me to direct the project. The case studies were to be written up as part of the final report to the SSRC, and this was also to contain a general discussion of the trends, findings and issues raised by the individual studies.

The National Children's Centre was one of the 10 projects selected for study. As with all the other schemes the agreement was that the National Children's Centre would be evaluated in terms of its own objectives and would have the opportunity to read, correct inaccuracies and comment on any draft of the case study report before it was seen by others. In the case of the NCC these arrangements were not adhered to.

A summary of the findings which did not rest on disputed information was sent to the Director of social services for Kirklees at his request and with permission from the SSRC for internal use in his department. This was not in the form of a research report.

In recent publicity it has been suggested that conflicts of interest may exist since my husband has become chairman of the National Children's Centre trustees. To avoid such a possibility it has been agreed with the SSRC that the final work on this case study, including checking the NCC's comments on the research assistant's draft, is to be undertaken by the Professor of Social Work at the University of Bristol.

Nationally in times of recession there can be tension between those who argue solely for state provision and those who see value in and encourage self-help, community and voluntary action. This seems to be a sterile debate and I am only sorry that information stemming from our research should have been used as ammunition.

I hope that once the final report is written *The TES* will be prepared to give as much space to an account of mind discussion of its findings, and that this will include but will not be restricted to the NCC case study.

SONIA JACKSON  
Lecturer in social work  
School of Applied Social Studies  
University of Bristol

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Further details from:  
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## Have chalk will travel

RYLAND TIPPET

Richard Welch's article in Talkback (TES, January 28) on "Lickers and job mongers" irritated me sufficiently for me to feel a reply was needed.

I agree with much of what he wrote but there are three points which seem unanswerable. First, I take issue with the demand for "many of the letters of application had not been individually tailored and those that were printed stood out like a sore thumb". Over the past three years, I have changed posts twice at head of department level in secondary schools - once to take a post abroad.

Without the facilities abroad to investigate particular schools, what would be the point of trying to tailor, individually, letters of application? In writing for posts, I have always applied to as many schools as possible. The time taken to write personalized-to-school letters of application would have been enormous. Also, I would simply have been repeating the same information in a slightly different form.

Second, surely it is rare for any-

Occasionally, having time on my hands, I leaf through the copy as well as the classified sections of *The TES*, and one of the special, if slightly misanthropic, pleasures is in finding a headmaster's critique of the last application harvest.

Richard Welch's contribution to the edition (TES, January 28) was a goodhumoured and relatively compassionate example, particularly when compared to the pettifoggish, pedantic and crasser versions which can leave the inveterate application-monger wondering who judged the judges. Moreover it made the candid admission that the system he operated was a negative one.

Nevertheless, the criticisms made are two-edged. Surely, for instance, in times when a single application - possibly one of many - calls for three or more often four stamps (request for details plus SAE, application plus SAE) it would be possible to extend deadlines to allow second class mail to be used? It is expensive, too, supplying schools with stationery to enable them to send out duly adjusted photocopies of let-

## Inveterate jobmonger

PETER WRIGHT

ters of regret. Increasingly they do not even bother to do this in which case one is simply supplying them with stationery. I sometimes wonder if advertisements are run with the sole aim of easing the burden on petty cash, with teams of trained inspectors steaming off stamps and Tappex envelopes.

Handwriting, I concede, is most useful when legible, but surely candidates should be allowed to overcome tendencies to scrawl by using a typewriter - unless of course the choice is so difficult that miniature graphology is envisaged?

How much non-factual information to supply is always arguable, and as most of it will at interview prove patently untrue, the one small

Third, my curriculum vitae is a carefully typed (not professional, I've done it myself) and copied. Two sides explain my background, teaching ability, and extra-curricular work, other activities. The third and fourth are my teaching experience and dates while the fifth side has six references.

It takes just over two minutes to read the first two sheets from a headmaster is going to do, whether he wants to interview me or not.

When I first wrote those sheets I took many hours of doing so and consultation with colleagues whose opinions I valued. They are the very best, in all ways that I have to offer. What can I say if it succeeds in gaining views?

Ryland Tippet was formerly headmaster at St George's C.E. Primary School, Bournemouth, and now teaches at Uppingham School, Leicestershire.

sheet of Basil Don Road consists of at least five to six lines of text. This is a virtue often shared by the odd named "further" particulars supplied by schools.

Richard Welch's most bizarre of all was that all candidates have, since early childhood, had long cherished dream not only to teach but to teach at the very best in the world. In short, custom-built candidate for a self-aggrandizing ex-stationer of a graphic inclination with a talent for phrasing hypocrisy and lies in the GPO.

More could be done with anything is better than a negative approach, the only virtue of which it ultimately absorbs the lack of final responsibility - best of the bunch etc. Who knows, buried in the rejected pile, on a dog's stool, almost illegible in purple with matching prose may be a ideal candidate. Me for instance.

Peter Wright recently obtained PGCE.

## Speak to me only

WYN MORAN

Many English departments are now in the final throes of the oral requirement for CSE English language examinations. There can be little doubt that oracy should be a skill encouraged and developed by all English teachers. Fluent speech will assuredly be of greater significance than will writing skills for life after school. But the testing of such oracy is suspect, particularly in the guise of the formal, prepared talk.

Most rubrics require that such talks should last approximately five minutes, with one minute for questions. It also requires that audio-visual aids should be employed and that the reading of pre-written talks be heavily penalized.

The exercise should encapsulate five years of the delicate nurturing of linguistic skills: the capacity for in-depth research; the organization and creation of interest-provoking material; the use of appropriate language in a flowing sequence and the ability to answer questions concisely and cogently.

The utility is far more likely to border on the comic rather than the scholarly, with the stoves, rather than the industrious or extrovert, emerging as the high scorers.

As every teacher knows, the malfunctioning of audio-visual aids can ruin an otherwise well-prepared lesson. The formal, prepared talk specifies the use of such aids, which, in most cases, acquire a will of their own, as in:

The talk on coarse fishing, where the rod is deftly assembled into a nine-foot, quivering mechanism which catches in the globe of the light-lit and will not budge;

The talk on the Labrador with

Crafts' certificates for obedience, which mounds over the classes' regulation timetables and at the command, "Stay!" disgraces himself the teacher's feathered boots;

The talk on Elvis Presley with gaudy souvenir annually carefully primed with numbered bits of paper. The candidate opens with: "My talk is on Elvis!" she holds up her books to show the cover in his hair-chested glory and all the closely followed by the girl's tears as she realizes that she has lost all her places.

Practical demonstrations are also allowed, provided that the verbal explanation takes precedence. All too often such talks result in messy elusos from the squirting of water icing, which refuses to peak, onto a wonky cake, to the degutting of a chicken, leaving unidentifiable blobs of entrails and clots of dried blood on teacher's desk, mark-book and handbag.

Teachers are expected to take into account the interest aroused in the content of the talk. Inexorably, it is the naughtiest speeches which promote the liveliest response.

These usually occur just after a hearty school dinner, when some St John's Ambulance buff recites vivid narratives like the tale of the man who could not fit through the ambulance doors because of the Rf spike through his stomach; the account of the gouging-out of someone's eyes. Gloucester lashion, in some local gang warfare, or the speech from the former's lad who shows slides on the artificial insemination of the family's Guernseys.

The learned talk is met with bored leers, as well it might be when it turns out to be the ubiquitous discourse on narrow-gauge railways, with its assassination of the names of Welsh townships; its interminable hand-outs of badges and postcards and its ending with a tape recording of the highlights of a train journey.

It does happen, perhaps once a year, that a Billy Casper of the future emerges - the pupil with nothing about him, who cannot string two written words together and yet gives a lyrical rendering of his feelings in poems or loads of his agonizing. He has to be marked down, of course, because he stutters and giggles; he does not use any visual aids and he stands with his head on his chest and elbows on his pulkover.

The inflexibility of the situation can render the most capable candidate inarticulate. Oracy is vital, but for candidates are likely to be called upon to give a formal, prepared talk in their adult life.

The talk usually forms only a part of the oral requirements of the examination, though it carries the greatest weight. Informal group discussion and reading aloud are other components. The organization of these three activities for the majority of a school's fifth-form pupils involves serious disruption.

All three activities could be assessed in a one-to-one foreign language session, as in many foreign language tests. The teacher might ask the pupils questions relating to their interests. There might be discussion on current events and issues after reading aloud by each pupil of a selection of articles from a journal or newspaper.

A selection of tapes could then be marked by a panel of teachers, ensuring a standardized assessment. Tapes could also be forwarded to external moderators.

Such recorded sessions would test a pupil's ability to provide interest; to organize his thoughts in cogent statements; to use appropriate language and answer questions clearly. The one-to-one oral session would surely bear more relevance to the formal and informal speech candidates will meet beyond school.

Wyn Moran is head of English at Philip Howard School, Glasgow.

## Should children's stories reflect the realities of animal life asks Nicholas Tucker



## Animal magic



Animals' closeness yet apartness from human beings can be used to advantage in other ways by story-tellers. Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit, for example, is both child-like yet also able to have far more exciting adventures than any normal infant, involving theft, near-discovery, and ultimate escape from death at the hands of a sworn enemy.

In the same way, Anna Sewall's Black Beauty offers an exceptionally sharp view of what human beings look like from an unusual vantage point, and also stands witness to the degradation and final death of Ginger, an old horse comrade, which is portrayed in human terms would surely be far too painful ever to get into print for children.

By contrast, the animal characters in Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* lead a life free of the constraints that can make human existence so much more fraught. Liberated both from economic necessity and sexual drive, Mole, Rat and Toad potter around in a blameless life of picnics and river outings, sharing all the privileges of adults with the tastes and inclinations of childhood, and so illustrating a fantasy world of lasting appeal. Although *The Wind* pointed out, when it was first published, that "As a contribution to natural history, the work is negligible", no one has ever really minded this, either then or at any time since.

When animals are used like this, to serve in the imagination in a way that human characters could not emulate, it is ridiculous to object to various unnatural characteristics that make them so appealing in the first place. So while Kenneth Grahame occasionally inserts authentic animal detail, such as otter's habit of diving after fish in mid-conversation, these are mere romantic touches.

In most other respects, in this and many other well-loved animal stories, all important

natural history laws are broken. Animal characters like wise owls or cunning snakes, for example, are associated with such human qualities because of their looks rather than their behaviour, and where any plainly unrealistic story was concerned, only a pendant could try to debunk such ancient couplings, or else insist that in reality robins are seldom quite as sweet as they look and eagles tend to be pugnacious rather than war-like.

A problem for conservationists does arise, though, when certain animals seem to receive a habitually bad press in children's books. Predators, for example, are often described as the villains of their stories, since tender-hearted young readers find it difficult to see the hunting and devouring of other animals as a natural part of the ecological balance.

Writers are not immune from social pressure, however, and at least it is rare now to find the more exotic predators, like wicked tigers or menacing lions, portrayed as such in children's stories today. This is not loss, given that humans have little enough to be proud of in their past dealings with animal life.

In the same way, the glamorization of big-game hunting once found in children's writers like R M Ballantyne surely has no place on modern library shelves for the young. But more modest, home-grown predators also have greater need of understanding now, and there is a case - again in reasonably realistic stories - for no longer trotting out certain ancient animal stereotypes, so that the fox, for example, does not always come out as the villain in his quest for the rabbit.

Even rats, in Robert O'Brien's *Mrs Frisby and the rats of NIMH*, can emerge as the heroes of their story, so proving that the firmest negative animal stereotype can always be challenged in the works of a gifted writer.

At the same time, writers who do set out to

describe true to life animal stories should be expected to get their most important facts right. In Jack London's two epic novels, *White Fang* and *The Call of the Wild*, the dog-heroes do lead powerfully realistic existences for their own times. But even when animal characters are plainly fantasy figures, there is still my need in most stories always to get too far away from reality in the way, for example, we can more easily accept in satire, proverb, parable or fairy story. As Margaret Blount points out in *Animal Land*, her excellent study of this whole genre, the moment in Felix Salten's best-selling novel *Hanski*, for example, when the death of a pheasant arouses "the sympathies of a wide circle who tried to comfort his inconsolable widow" now seems embarrassingly left.More earthly, and surely much more honest, are the occasional imagined comments of the animals in Enid Bagnold's classic, *National Velvet*. "Birdies good?" asks a human character at one time, seeing the funny dog Jacob trotting back home up the empty road.

"Succulent", said Jacob, making a half-circle around her." Even so, attempts at completely realistic animal stories may always remain too much for most young children. The typical short life-cycle of a pig, or a bullock, for example, is still something perhaps better not told in all its graphic detail to infants, as yet unprepared for the harshness of the real world, or for Alphabet Books that could ever begin with "A is for Abattoir".

Occasional harsh cruelty sometimes displayed by animals themselves would also fit nicely into stories for the very young. Such detail belongs more to natural history fiction, which should be expected to tell all of the truth.

When this source is suspect too, critics have every right to object. Children reading *Warship Down*, after all, at least know this is a story. Books like Gavin Maxwell's best-selling *A Ring of Bright Water*, on the other hand, can be far more misleading in the way they pass off sentimental human-animal romances under the name of scientific observation.

If story-tellers must always be allowed some licence, though, this should not mean that they can be expected to write any old rubbish about animals. Stories that gloss over the realities of circus life and training, for example, deserve the criticism that any deluge of organized cruelty should incur.

Describing anything in print that could lead to harming animals should also be thought about very carefully first, given that children can be very imitative. It is too late now to do much about *Ding Dong Bell*, *Passy in the Well*, though animal welfare officers have sometimes accused it of putting ideas into the heads of children that were better not there. But when characters in Kipling's *Sally & Co* or Richard Crompton's William hooks casually shoot cats for sport, this clearly seems wrong now, and would not be encouraged in any modern story for children.Other critics have objected recently to the glorification of fox-hunting found in contemporary children's books, in particular K M Peyton's *Flamboyant* series. Those who defend fox-hunting, however, could hardly be expected to share this condemnation. Final judgment on the whole issue of animal stories, therefore, will always rest at least to some extent on personal values, which is why arguments about particular books will probably always be with us, come what may.



# THE VIRTUES OF NECESSITY

Leicestershire's 10 to 14 schools claim to provide the best of both worlds; specialist teaching for younger children and child-centred teaching beyond the primary school. Bob Doe reports



The age at which children transfer from one school to another is probably less important than the steps taken to ensure transfer involves the least possible trauma, disruption and waste. It is arguable also that whether they find themselves in primary and secondary schools or in a middle school system, is less important than whether they are taught the right things at the right time and in the right way.

But Leicestershire's unusual brand of high schools for 10 to 14-year-olds suggest there could be positive advantages to transfer at one age rather than another; advantages, both educational and administrative, that have led the county to expand its 10 to 14 schools at a time when falling rolls are persuading others to close their middle schools to maintain the secondary curriculum.

Schools spanning the 10 to 14 range were suggested in Leicestershire by the county's former visionary and chief education officer, Stewart Mason. Even before transfer at ages other than 11 was made legal in 1968 after the Plowden report, Mason wanted them as part of his Leicestershire plan.

The arguments were that four-year junior secondary schools would have longer to carry out their distinctive task, would span the period of early adolescence more satisfactorily and would give children earlier access to specialist teaching.

To be sure, there was a happy element of economic convenience about modest sized junior high school feeding larger upper schools at a time of expansion and secondary reorganization. It fitted many of the buildings spread around small rural communities, though many of the high schools began as 11 to 14 schools. Leicestershire has long been committed to the conversion of these to 10 to 14 schools and falling rolls now make this possible.

But the recent expansion of the original three 10 to 14 schools to six, with others now in the pipeline, is not just a matter of expediency. Andrew Fairbairn, the county's chief education officer, is clearly convinced they have proved themselves and is pursuing the plan with more than a little zeal.

"There is a totally different atmosphere in a 10 to 14 school", he claimed. And it is true that there is a noticeable lack of the sort of outish behaviour that often infects 14-year-olds in an 11 to 16 school. Disenchanted

adolescents, insecure about their status and future, clash with the sort of blanket discipline often felt necessary to manage an awkward mix of children and near adults.

The upper schools, with their fresh start and more adult treatment, are much better able to cater for 14 to 16-year-olds, it is claimed. These schools also open up intriguing possibilities of a coherent 14 to 19 education that is now so much talked about; possibilities denied to sixth-form colleges.

The third year of an 11 to 16 school, where the seeds of difficult behaviour often germinate, are the top group in a junior secondary school. At 14 they are the leaders; the stars of games, music and school plays, the ones given a chance to act responsibly.

As one head put it: "Children get the best of both worlds. They are able to grow from a child to an adult in a gentle, warm, supportive atmosphere without heavy discipline."

Ooe teacher commented: "In 10 to 14 schools children are allowed to have their childhood; too often they grow up too quickly."

Another major claim for the 10 to 14 schools is that by mixing primary and secondary teachers, and providing the labs and workshops of a secondary school, primary education is both extended and enriched.

The suggestion is that children at this age should learn what, and in the way, their level of development demands, not what an exam course for the majority of them higher up the school dictates; they should have their fair

share of expert teaching, not what is left over after the first years at breakneck speed; and that the move from learning by rote to the more abstract and verbal styles of secondary school learning should be more gradual.

Andrew Fairbairn called the extension of child-centred learning "the primaryisation of secondary schooling", and there is some evidence that it is happening in 10 to 14 schools, and more so than in 11 to 14 schools.

But what of the disadvantages? There are two main ones. The first is the disruption and twice the disruption of the transfer from primary to secondary school. The second is the disruption of the transfer from primary to secondary school.

Leicestershire's claim on these is an interesting one; that these weak links in the educational chain are being strengthened. It takes place more effectively by virtue of necessity. "They are forced to work together at every level", said Andrew Fairbairn.

John Armistage said the result was that even when subjects were being taught by form teachers in the first year they were doing so under the leadership of subject specialists. The role of the teacher with special responsibility for a subject mentioned in the HMI survey has been made a reality in Leicestershire schools.

When the first intake of 10-year-olds leave, the 14-year-olds are disappointed if they are not national average, shows transfer at 14 a complete disaster.

Gartree High School, Oadby, is the largest school to convert to 10 to 14. It took six forms of 10-year-olds this year along with its last 11-year-old intake.

Already, according to John Armistage, a new head, the 10-plus year has become a "springboard" for curriculum innovation. The curriculum is differentiated into separate subjects throughout the school. Whereas the sciences were taught, now combined science is being introduced because it allows pupils to start at their various points of development and to progress independently at their own pace.

The graded tests in French offered by the East Midlands CSE board suit the



schools well. French begun at 10 leads not only to O level for a minority in the year school but to intermediate level in the year even for those who drop it at 11.

Castle Donnington High School in the north of the county, hard by the East Midlands airport, was one of the first 10 to 14 schools. It was set up in 1970. Like Gartree and Oadby, Beauchamp Upper School next door is being consolidated. Heads of department and corresponding heads of faculty meet at least once a term and Oadby staff are often at Gartree, teaching on the fourth year count-down and careers course, describing what teaching and the sharing of teachers and resources.

These areas give the first year a distinctive primary flavour, with each form supervised by two teachers: one of the most talented and conscientious staff who thrive on challenge and who would make a go of the most presentation work integrated with the most specialist teaching in music, art, drama, PE and French.

Paul Sykes, headmaster of Castle Donnington, said: "We are meeting the needs of the child for security and for a limited number of teachers to relate to... matching needs and subject development needs."

At Gartree, John Armistage has

side a sheltered, paved area outside the building for use by the first years at breakneck speed in response to parents' fears that the youngest children might be intimidated. Inverval styles of secondary school learning with its new intake this year, but with its last intake of 11-year-olds rather than the new 10-year-olds.

But both schools are anxious to avoid the impression that the first year is something apart. It has been said that the real discord in junior secondary schools is between the 10 and 11-year-old age groups. But Paul Sykes said: "The first year is not a school within a school. The base unit teachers also teach their specialism further up the school and often teach their old first year forms in the second year personal and social development course."

At Gartree, Alan Smith has overall responsibility for the first year. That is partly a general job but also entails ensuring that each subject department in the school has someone to terms with a four-year curriculum starting at age 10.

John Armistage said the result was that even when subjects were being taught by form teachers in the first year they were doing so under the leadership of subject specialists. The role of the teacher with special responsibility for a subject mentioned in the HMI survey has been made a reality in Leicestershire schools.

When the first intake of 10-year-olds leave, the 14-year-olds are disappointed if they are not national average, shows transfer at 14 a complete disaster. ... breaking the 11-plus barrier has led us to pay attention to the real needs of children."

The broad junior high school curriculum seems remarkably resilient to falling rolls. It is a sort of creeping specialization; a lot of interdisciplinary work like "Man, a course" or "The World of the Future", lower down the school gradually differentiated into separate subjects. The need to form viable exam and entry groups is, of course, deferred to the larger upper school.

The optimum size for a 10 to 14 school was thought to be about 720 (six form entry) but Castle Donnington could drop soon to 567 without significant strains on the curriculum. According to the head, Paul Sykes, it could be even smaller and still they could sustain a curriculum with a bit of understanding. County Hall and teachers willing, to accept a second subject at this level. The risk was to the separate remedial provision and the second music specialist.

The key to a three-level education system - some would say the price - is the frequency of meetings necessary between teachers at every level. At Castle Donnington Paul Sykes holds a series of monthly meetings between high school and feeder primary staff. A decision to introduce a faster course in a second foreign language (German) had to be taken in consultation with the upper school and the other high school feeding into it.

At Gartree, Alan Smith is working hard to build relationships with the feeder primaries. Understandably, perhaps, some had reservations about losing their top pupils, even if it did mean space for more four-year-olds. "It was determined primary schools would see we were doing the right thing for their children," Mr Smith said.

Now information is flowing in both directions. Primary heads are asking for feedback on the performance of their former pupils in the new areas like maths.

At the other end of the school, the long-standing close relationship between Gartree and Oadby, Beauchamp Upper School next door is being consolidated. Heads of department and corresponding heads of faculty meet at least once a term and Oadby staff are often at Gartree, teaching on the fourth year count-down and careers course, describing what teaching and the sharing of teachers and resources.

It may be that Leicestershire has managed to attract to these pioneering schools talented staff and who would make a go of the most presentation work integrated with the most specialist teaching in music, art, drama, PE and French.

Paul Sykes, headmaster of Castle Donnington, said: "We are meeting the needs of the child for security and for a limited number of teachers to relate to... matching needs and subject development needs."

At Gartree, John Armistage has

# Vouchsafing school choice

Brian Atkinson looks at the sparse evidence on the way education vouchers work



There is no ideal way of financing an education and there are many valid criticisms of the present system. Those who favour vouchers tend to believe that governments are a necessary evil whose influence should be reduced wherever possible to give more freedom to individuals. In the case of education, they believe that the present system reduces parental choice and that vouchers would extend it.

The notion of choice is a key one, for at least in vouchers is just one aspect of a wider belief in the use of market systems for deciding what goods and services should be produced. Supporters argue that market forces made the supply of goods and services as diverse as banking, baked beans and braces more efficient as competition makes producers responsive to the demands of the consumer. They contrast this with education where consumers seem to have little choice; where producers in the form of local education authorities and teachers decide how many schools will be provided, what organizational arrangements these will have and what the curriculum will be. The consumers - parents and children - can do little but acquiesce; therefore it is argued the education system ought to be changed to make it more market orientated.

One way to do this is to introduce a system of vouchers. There are in fact a number of differing voucher systems, but the simplest is where parents would be provided with a voucher equal to the average value of a year's education, say £500 for a child of primary school age or £900 at secondary. Parents would take this voucher to any school - public or private - and in return the child would receive an education.

Rather like a book token, a more expensive education could be bought if parents were prepared to "top-up" the value of a voucher. Schools that were popular and responsive to parents' wishes would have high incomes and could improve their facilities and pay high salaries, while unpopular schools would face the discipline of the market and be forced to change or close.

Evidence - as opposed to argument - is rather fragmentary. A survey and investigation was carried out in Kent and a voucher experiment took place in the United States. The Kent investigation consisted largely of a number of surveys in the Ashford division, so area with 52 maintained schools and 81,000 people. At the age of 11, children transfer to middle schools and at 13 some transfer to upper schools, as a result of "guided parental

choice". The system seems to provide a substantial amount of choice, for over 95 per cent of children obtained their first choice of school at 11, and there were only about 10 appeals a year against the 13-plus choice of schools.

The investigators asked parents which school they would send their child to if they had a voucher. About 13 per cent suggested they would send their child to a different school and some 17 per cent of parents from social class 1 would move their child from a state to a private school if a voucher were available.

Teachers were also questioned and voiced strong opposition to the scheme, partly prompted by the teacher unions who recognized that jobs may be at risk in a full voucher scheme. The strongest support came from private schools in the area who realized that the scheme would give a subsidy to parents choosing private education.

The cost of the scheme would vary considerably depending on what was included. The estimates suggest that in 1977 for the Ashford area, a limited scheme would cost just over £90,000 for additional administrative expenses. If the scheme were expanded to include extra classrooms, free transport for pupils to the school of their choice, a supplementary voucher for children from poor homes, and if the vouchers could be used at independent schools, the cost would rise to nearly £2 million.

The biggest item would be the subsidy to children going to independent schools. There may be some savings if some teachers in the maintained sector were no longer required. For the country as a whole the cost today would vary between £100m and over £2,000m, depending on what was included. Note that these costs are additional to those incurred in running the present system of education.

Surveys do not tell the whole story, for there is a huge gap which divides what people say they will do from what actually happens. The only example of the results of an actual voucher experiment comes from the US. Towards the end of the 1960s the US Office of Economic Opportunity wanted a voucher trial but the only area willing to experiment was a school district called Alum Rock in San Jose, California.

Alum Rock is a poor area where half the children are Mexican-American and the population is highly transient, with nearly a third of the people moving each year. The district received additional funds for the experiment and it was extensively monitored by the Rand Corporation. It is doubtful whether

any education experiment has been the subject of so much testing.

The basic voucher system was modified in a number of ways. Children from poor families received an additional voucher so that schools with a high proportion of disadvantaged children received more money. Families were not allowed to "top-up" the voucher and there was a lottery system of admission to schools where the number of applicants exceeded the places available. Children travelling to distant schools had free transport.

Teacher resistance was mollified because job tenure was guaranteed. In order to extend choice, existing schools were sometimes divided into "mini-schools" which sought to provide distinct programmes, sometimes rather exotic. Thus the Goss school divided into three mini schools: *Learning Unlimited* which was geared round individualized instruction in basic skills, *Reading Enrichment and Discovery (READ)* stressing reading and maths with children grouped by ability and *Tomorrow Today* where "the program is designed to prepare for the future... today. Academic excellence is our goal!"

Other mini schools included *Learning Odyssey* which wilt "provide the child with skills needed in one's journey through life", *Basic Educational Skills Training (BEST)* and *We're 4 KIDS (Kommunity Involvement Develops Success)*. "We believe in building success in children by helping them feel good about themselves... we will build a sense of community in the classroom."

In spite of all the effort the results were limited. So far as the curriculum was concerned the researcher reported that despite apparent differences "the voucher system has not generated educational alternatives that are highly diverse... the voucher classrooms are strikingly similar to the non-voucher classrooms."

There was some decentralization of decision making but, so far as the curriculum was concerned, power did not pass from producers to consumers but from administrators in the district office to teachers. The price paid for this by teachers was "an avalanche of meetings", an occupational hazard for all those concerned with curriculum development.

The parents did benefit: enormous efforts were put into informing parents of what alternatives were available and this had some effect. For the first year about 10 per cent of parents chose non-neighbourhood schools and, in later years, the proportion rose to 18 per cent. The researchers concluded "the voucher demonstration appreciably increased parental choice among educational alternatives, but most parents failed to become more autonomous, powerful or involved."

Parental choice was not related to child's achievement and academically the introduction of vouchers seemed to make little or no difference. For example, the researchers found it hard to differentiate between reading achievements in regular and alternative schools.

The precise effect of the introduction of vouchers would depend on the type of voucher introduced. Since the Kent survey shows that parents from social class 1 would be far more likely to use their voucher to move their child to the independent system, the result of a voucher scheme which included this sector would be to increase division in society. Those from higher social classes would increasingly be educated at independent schools while the maintained system educated the rest.

Vouchers may increase parental choice of school, but the extent of choice depends on the availability of vacant places in popular schools. These could probably be provided at less cost under the present system of financing. Education seems to be one area where the introduction of market forces would have few beneficial effects and substantial disadvantages.

Brian Atkinson is a senior lecturer at Preston Polytechnic School of Economics and Business Studies



## REVIEW



The Longest War. By Jacobo Timerman. Chatto & Windus £7.95. Picador £2.50.

The Third Way. A Journal of Life in the West Bank. By Raja Shehadeh. Quartet £5.95.

It is in a mood of near despair that Jacobo Timerman records in *The Longest War* his torment as a Zionist at "the paranoid way" in which Begin and Shimon "employed Israeli might" upon Lebanese territory in order to destroy the Palestinian people "and liquidate their national identity."

Any gentle who wrote in such terms about Israel - even when, under Begin, "for the first time in history a terrorist has the world's best armed forces at his disposal" - would expect to be denounced by numerous "friends" of Israel as a neo-fascist in the pay of Libya. As a prominent Jew who was imprisoned and tortured in Argentina for daring to oppose the Junta's rule, Timerman has the kind of moral credentials that even the most benighted apologist for the Israeli régime will find hard to undermine. Moreover, the case against the government is impressively argued by a man who declares that to life in Israel "is the Jewish destiny".

Underlying Timerman's impassioned polemic is the fear that his nation has embarked on a course of self-destruction. As a newcomer to Israel, he is still exploring the ethnic and social geography of his home, and as an intelligent political journalist he is disturbed by the discovery that for all those liberals who rage at the horrors committed upon Lebanon in their name, there are many more who are prone to chant "Begin, the King of Israel".

The revolution with which Timerman responds to the news bulletins that report the unrelenting advance of the Israeli defence forces towards Beirut - where many more children were killed in one month by Israeli weapons "than from 30 years of PLO terrorism" - is sharpened by his own experience of the front. As the reluctant war correspondent strode through the rubble that had been their homes, the nervous citizenry of Lebanon greeted him with the word "Shalom", but he

## At the eleventh hour

Jonathan Dimbleby reviews two books whose topicality has been dramatically reinforced by last week's report on the Beirut massacres

records in his diary, "I don't fraternize with those I have subdued by force".

Back home, he reflects on the official propaganda that portrays the Palestinian identity as "shapeless, undefined, confused, nearly paranoid, almost criminal" and is momentarily encouraged that the soldiers he has met, who were obliged to fight for Begin's fanatical vision, discovered in the process that they were in reality waging war against a people with an identity "no more confusing than their own".

Although he is harsh on the PLO - and simplistically so, as if to balance his disgust for Begin and Sharon - Timerman is convinced that "we need the Palestinians as much as they need us". The author does not however attempt to offer a blue-print for the transformation of that insight into a political programme to counter the prevailing illusion that "the most perfect expression of our national will: our military might" can resolve the Palestinian problem. However, his insistence that the conflict is between "two people who are right" is in effect a plea for the rest of the world to help the people of Israel to save the soul of Zionism by reversing a policy towards the Palestinians that is "cruel, unjust and inhuman".

Perhaps it was impossible to prevent the invasion of Lebanon, but if Washington cannot or will not arrest the Israeli takeover of the West Bank, then the Middle East is surely doomed to future conflict that will make what has happened so far seem like a minor offshoot.

If Timerman writes like the conscience of an oppressor, then Raja Shehadeh is a counsel for the oppressed. In *The Third Way*, the author, who is a Palestinian lawyer by profes-

sion, displays a liberal intelligence that informs him, like Timerman, that neither people have an exclusive right to the territory that is disputed between them. But he is bleak about the prospect of reconciliation between two nations who are bound together by "our determination, on either side of the fence, to persist, not to pack up our bags and leave the land we love in the hands of those who are driving us to war".

As a journal about life in the West Bank under Israeli occupation, *The Third Way* is a penetrating and compassionate document. Uniquely, it is an insider's view that is rarely marred by hyperbole, exaggeration or hatred. As a result, it is a particularly damning commentary on a military occupation that debases both Jew and Arab, humiliating both peoples in the process.

As an advocate, Raja Shehadeh defends Arab clients in Israeli courts where "kindly but firmly you are not believed" by the military authorities as he tries to set the confused, incoherent evidence of frightened Palestinians against "the precise documented official account of the army" - in a legal process that takes place "in our land conducted by strangers".

Sometimes he is frightened - "petrified and numb" - by a bullying and unreasonable soldier who torments him at a road block or on official who interrogates him at the airport on his return from taking his manuscript of "The West Bank and the Rule of Law" to the International Commission of Jurists in Geneva. More often he is angry, but silent, until he epiphaes his eloquent misery into the pages of his journal. Remarkably, however - because this book is essentially by a victim about his

tormentors - there is also much that is humane and compassionate. He writes tenderly of an Israeli friend and rejoices when he sees an Israeli soldier playing with a group of boys. And by way of anecdote, observation and a most vulnerable integrity, he reveals the courageous ambiguity of a man that he has chosen - the third way, between open confrontation and mute submission.

Harder men, irritated by his subtlety, are inclined to brand him as a "collaborator" continuing to practice his profession; he is crushing about one of his colleagues, a legal freedom-fighter - who uses the word "salvage his own political conscience" sending his client off in a blaze of rhetoric the longest jail-term possible. It is a mixture of envy and resentment that he mistrusts the exploits of the fedayeen - who in to shoot up the place and then "with their pride and dignity intact" - with him drum fate of those who cling to the homes and land against all the pressure he Israel, those who stay put as Samid, "waiting defenceless as in a slaughterhouse, for turn in come".

There is much in *The Third Way* that shocks even those who believe that they are well acquainted with the situation on the West Bank. After a shooting in Hebron, there is a round-up, not of terrorists, but, randomly, of local citizens. The adults are instructed to crawl on their hands and knees, saying "I am an animal", while their children are obliged to spit in the faces of their parents. Such indignities - and there are many more recorded in this pages - are not without effect upon the victims: "We manipulate and defer to avoid so naturally that we do not even see the humiliation and shame."

Both *The Longest War* and *The Third Way* offer important testimony at the eleventh hour, which should be urgently absorbed by all those in Europe and the United States who have the power and authority to influence the course of history in the Middle East - and by anyone who wants to understand what it is to endure the malignant effects of this crisis.

## Laughter lines

Humphrey Evans spends a week clowning

It is going to be the worst morning of the whole week. It is Wednesday morning. A half-way through a five-day course on clowning. Fourteen of us, dressed up in a collection of castoffs, are sitting in a large circle. Tutor John, a clown, mime, street-entertainer, lecturer in politics and economics, assures us that nothing else we do this week will be as bad. One by one we are going to stand up, enter the circle - and make the rest laugh. I told you to prepare for it last night," says John, "you'd only have said, 'Still, we are some way to being funny and clowns, as John has pointed out, are heroes, ever-ready to take on a challenge.' Monday morning saw us playing games that would help us put our trust in each other as well as learning everybody's name. We talked a bit about the shape of the clown. And we had our first strict lesson, the deadpan, learning not to laugh, or smile, or frown unless we meant to.

Tuesday morning took us into history, the Italian *Commedia dell'Arte* with its Harlequin and other personae. Wearing masks we discovered that happened as we took stock of ourselves to extremes and saw the Young Ones. In the afternoon we made a start on skills like juggling before moving on to the *au-tout*, the baggy-toussered buffoon, the clown, the dressing-up box, the funny walks and mannerisms that would go with our new-found selves.



For John, clowning is an adult form. The clown is naive but not a child. He does take his own Circus Minimus group into schools, organizing performances around the children's hidden talents for juggling, face-pulling, double-jointed dancing and other playground secrets. However, he keeps them away from clowning itself. "Clowning isn't just all these edges, an animal quality, a gut response, even pain. It has moments of cruelty. Look at Chaplin. There's cruelty in all the things he did, cruelty and care. It's the opposites that are interesting, but children pick up the one side and end up being fairly blatantly cruel to each other."

For us 14, with our newly-flown ambitions as street-entertainers, there may still be some way to go. But we do know what it is like to stand up in front of an audience, of our peers and then and there do something that will make them laugh.

For information about further clowning courses in London and Bristol, contact John Lee, Rose Cottage, Aller Hill, Aller, Nr Langport, Somerset or The Mime Centre, St Martin's Hall, Vickers Road, London NW5.

## ARTS



'The Meeting' or 'Have a nice day, Mr Hockney', 1981-3, by Peter Blake

## Sentiment and nostalgia

Peter Blake Retrospective and James Barry: The Artist as Hero. The Tate Gallery until March 20. Indian Drawing and Landscape in Britain 1850-1950. The Hayward Gallery until April 17.

By the time Peter Blake appeared in Ken Russell's 1961 television documentary *Pop Goes The East*, he had already presented himself in jeans and denim jacket covered with badges, sneakers on his feet and an Elvis magazine in one hand. Six years later, he provided the collage of a galaxy of heroes and heroines on the sleeve of The Beatles' "Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band".

The sentiment and nostalgia of that record are widespread in Blake's work, devoted as it is to popular culture and its stars. And as if to illustrate the point of identification by association, he not only collects photographs and other memorabilia but, either combines or translates these into his compositions. Sometimes compartmentalized like scenes from the life of a saint, they turn the picture into a kind of votive object.

Without these assembled elements, the illustrator in Blake stands exposed, barely camouflaged by a persistent refusal to bring all the

parts of a painting to the same finished state. He may vamp up the subject of fairies by adding a Lolita-like titillation, or parody Courbet in his recent "Have a nice day, Mr Hockney", but the end-products either look painted from photographs or lack the integration of a true work of art.

James Barry identified with great artists and heroes from the past but in the late eighteenth century his meant history-painting and the didactic transmission of noble ideals, as in his series "The Progress of Human Culture" at the Royal Society of Arts (Mondays 1-5pm). Barry, however, was more radical than that. Anticipating Romanticism in his disturbed and disturbing "King Lear Weeping over The Body of Cordelia", he created a most innovative composition to denounce the position of Catholics in Britain in "Passive Obedience".

Although the Indian drawings at The Hayward are from the eighteenth century there is not a hint of rebellion in them: despite the British occupation. In a conservative tradition, the Indian artist aimed at discovering the essence of his subjects not their changing condition, achieving an astounding range of expression with little more than line. In "A Lady Offers Wine to Her Lover", natural lighting and natural

form are over-looked in favour of a reverberation of arcing lines that epitomizes an erotic moment.

Just before the earliest landscapes in The Hayward exhibition, John Ruskin advised artists to "Go to nature in all singleness of heart, selecting nothing, rejecting nothing". By the fifties, the camera had become commonplace and the railway, motor-car and aeroplane, not to mention industrialization itself, had transformed our attitudes to nature as a whole. It is this that explains the difference between Holman Hunt's accumulation of detail in "Asparagus Island, Kynance" and Peter Lanyon's abstraction of foaming wave and aerially-viewed land in "Ground Sea".

Combining a comparably panoramic and particular view, this excellent touring show (it moves to Bristol, Stoke on Trent and Sheffield) puts works by relatively unknown painters, printmakers and photographers beside the already celebrated to make its many points, and ends very appropriately with a selection of book-jackets and illustrations from publications on the landscape theme, along with posters from the National Railway and London Transport museums.

Michael Clarke

## A shift in focus

Sally Jenkinson on an unusual piece of popular history

Russian Revolution. By Sheila Fitzpatrick. Oxford University Press £9.95. 0 19 219162 4.

The essential feat of Sheila Fitzpatrick's short study is to transpose "The Russian Revolution" from the pre-1914 war to the interwar arena of historical discussion. This is unusual for a popular history, although Orwell's *Animal Farm* attempted it in an allegorical form. How has the trick been brought off? And is it justifiable?

In answer to the first question it sets out to be more than merely another chronology of events because the author pays careful attention to different meanings of the concept of "revolution". First, she notes "revolution" can mean the overthrow of government by violent or other unconstitutional means. As examples, she cites the Liberal-led constitutional Revolution of 1905, the collapse of the Czarist autocracy in February 1917, and the Bolshevik coup in October, 1917. She then compares "revolution" used in all these senses with "revolution" meaning a social and economic

transformation. Borrowing for this purpose from theoretical writers such as Crane Brinton and Barrington Moore, she directs attention to the policies that followed the Bolshevik coup, especially those of Stalin's first Five Year Plan 1927-32. Thus the focus is shifted to the changes in the background and social composition of Russia's party cadres and ruling élite.

There are two advantages in this approach. The first is that while not overlooking the familiar chronological account of heroic events, it takes as the object of study "revolution" in its second defined sense. Thus the author can incorporate into her analysis her own previously published researches. The reader is presented with a cumulatively detailed account of Russian social and economic development between the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and Stalin's death in 1956. It is from this standpoint that a wide evaluation can be made of the Russian experience of social development and industrialization through government planning.

The second advantage of analysing the Rus-

sian Revolution as a social and economic process is that it focuses on some of the many myths about the nature of its achievement. Professor Fitzpatrick makes the wholly valid point that historians as well as laymen, within and outside Russia, are heirs to, or are held in thrall by, the myth of the Russian Revolution. Contemporary Russians, politicians from the under-developed world, and intellectuals from the industrialized democracies, necessarily wish to interpret the Russian experiment in the light of their own needs and convictions. Historians are wrong, she asserts, to assume that there is one "real" truth, and that other accounts are departures from it. They need to be aware of the myths in order to evaluate their significance. At the level of propaganda the revolutionary myth is being perpetually re-written. In 1936, for example, Khrushchev denounced Stalin's purges in the thirties. Yet a little later in the sixties memoir-writers were nostalgically recalling the cultural pluralism of the same decade.

The case, then, for a popular history such as this, written by an author who is demonstrably familiar with the source material, and which focuses on the cultural detail of the decades in which the present élite received its education, is particularly strong. For it was during the twenties and thirties that Stalin attempted to ensure that a new "revolutionary" élite should take over the jobs in the country's already extensive bureaucracy. Thus "Of the 860,000 jobs in the elite cate-

gory of leading cadres and specialists in November 1933, over 140,000 were filled by persons who had been workers at the time of 1928." Equally important is the fact that some 150,000 workers and Communist Party members received higher education during the first five year plan. Among them were Nikita Khrushchev, Leonid Brezhnev, and Alekssei Kossygin. Professor Fitzpatrick judges that this revolution was the beneficiaries of the revolution rather than its enthusiasts - earnest students of the engineering, for the most part, committed to the "industrializing party" rather than to the "fighting party".

It is then simultaneously myth and reality that the promises of the revolution have been fulfilled. Massive social mobility has been a feature of the Soviet Union for the past 50 years, even though the revolution was a failure. The revolution has been independently of the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks and Stalin's dictatorship.

Unquestionably the editors' aim to provide a new and authoritative account of the subject has succeeded. The author, in interpreting the Russian Revolution as a long process, linking the fighting revolutionaries of 1917 with the "conservative" cadres of the present, has enlivened the format of popular history with new scholarship.

Dr S. L. Jenkinson is a senior lecturer in politics and government at the Polytechnic, North London.

## Radio Flexibility, with hiccups

Will the recession cause "a whole generation" to be lost from the workforce? That was the question Mary Goldring set out to answer in *Analysis* recently. (The programme was the first in a new series of "Analysis" meant 40 to 60-years-olds. It was emotive rather than accurate since those under discussion formed only a part of the age-group - the rest were redundant. The mistake was unfortunate since one of *Analysis*'s particular strengths has been, and should be, its accuracy. Mary Goldring is perhaps developing too strong a taste for the question or phrase that pounds bold and dramatic.

The words "snatchers" and "stick-ups" used to mean categories of unemployed people, captured her. "Snatchers" take any employment they can find by getting back into work, better their chances of finding the job they most want in the end. "Stick-ups" wait for the "right" job and all too often end on the scrap heap. The distinction was interesting and useful but begged many questions. Surely there are many school leavers and others who are willing to take virtually any employment but stay on the dole?

Sadly, but of course wholly predictable, there seems little hope for those without work who are now over 40.

There was a hiccup in the second *Analysis* programme, on Australia, when someone said that if you scratch an Australian you find a racist. The remark was made during a conversation on the effects on the climate of turning the bush into prairie. The tenuous link between topics (Australia is now 40 per cent non-British in origin and farming methods are European) became unclear in the end. But, meanwhile, listener distraction and bewilderment had crept into the programme. It never fully recovered.

This programme had been substituted for the scheduled one, *New Life for Old Cities*, which will now be broadcast next week (Wednesday, 8.45 pm). It seemed an unconvincing advertisement for the policy of substituting one programme for another to gain "flexibility" and "an international dimension" on Radio 4. The effects of its speedy assembly were all too apparent. It seemed below par in content and editing. There seemed no need for it anyway. A thoughtful programme about not just Australian politicians but "Aus-

tralis" generally - which Mary Goldring insisted it was - surely does not need the peg of an election announcement. Conversely, an Australian election announcement does not seem to demand an immediate *Analysis* programme.

The nuclear debate, which is suddenly, rightly, filling the media, was given a valuable 45 minutes on Sunday on Radio 3. (The Nuclear Issue, 6 pm). Edward Luttwak, a hawkish American, argued all the main points with our own E. P. Thompson. He left an unsettling impression of humane-ness, compassion and insight. Thompson seemed to care less for the world and rather more for the fate of his theories. Perhaps Luttwak is merely the better performer. The two of them left the conviction that one's ultimate stand - whatever it is - is a leap in the dark.

When the *Wind Blows* by Raymond Briggs (The Monday Play, February 7, Radio 4) reached the heights, it had its faults, but its depiction of an old married couple keeping their china up with cups and saucers at the end of the world had the thrilling tidiness of the very best radio.

Frances Hill

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## ARTS

## Passion up ladders

Quixote. By Richard Curlik and John Retallick. By John Retallick and ATC. Donmar Warehouse Theatre. Charles's Aunt. By Brannan Thomas. Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.

The Actors Touring Company (ATC) has opened a 12-week London season with two of its best plays in repertoire. Following fairly close on the NT's massive *Don Quixote*, ATC offers a minimalist version of Cervantes' epic simply named *Quixote* using only seven actors, six ladders, puppets, rods and a few sticks of furniture. Not quite the classical definition of theatre as "two boards and a passion", it comes pretty close. Certainly there is passion – especially in Chris Barnes who plays Sancho Panza in a manner fit to burst. The rest of the cast work hard doubling, trebling, quadrupling roles; displaying varying degrees of proficiency in the superlative skills now required of "all round actors": intoning, singing, puppeteering.

John Retallick's script and direction works against these and disconcerting echoes of La Dolce Vita (for the Duke's court) and Hamlet (which Merlin's ghost seems to have studied). Too long, with more than one false ending, *Quixote* has a disarming simplicity (at its most inspired six ladders become three windmills) which is reductionist in effect. What comes over is a Comic Cuts version of Cervantes' masterpiece about a Spanish as Billy Merson's "Spaniard that lighted my life". It is good homespun acting (tourist class) but not up to West-

End standards: only Susan Biggs' superb musicianship is that. The simple, direct, emblematic acting style works wonders for the company's version of Cyril Connolly's translation of *Ubu Roi* – *Ubu The Vandalist*. Masks, mime, music and movement suit Jarry's cardboard cut-out characters very well, facilitating speed and economy in storytelling. ATC's version makes a better show than the heavy one with Mux Wall at the Royal Court years ago. But it does nothing to substantiate the inflated reputation of this "masterpiece of European theatre". Susan Colver's *Ma Ubu* has great style and controlled attack; Chris Barnes again works himself into a latrine – thrashing about, shouting, sweating – exhausting himself and us.

Griff Rhys Jones' assured ease crowns the revival of *Charles's Aunt* directed at a sparkling pace by Peter James/Peter Wilson. Looking like a young Willie Whitelaw he has the weight, gravitas and moon-calf lunatic qualities essential to Lord Babs' assumption of Charles's Brazilian aunt. Elspet Gray, the real Donna Lucia, has the poise, glamour and wariness to point up his grotesqueness. John Ringham's ingratiating hypocrite Spettigue is finely judged; David Ross almost makes Brasselet a starring part. It is all there – the chase, the tea-pot routine, the cigar – all spitting fun and wonderfully done. Also there is the insolent privilege of Victoria's cluy and its money-based marriage mart. Griff Rhys Jones' outrageous mugging, directed and controlled to a hair's breadth nicety of timing effect is a wonder of comic acting and agility; by Chris Barnes.

John James

## Stroke of luck

The Lucky Kid. By Alan Durman and Annette Laws. Halyard High School, Luton.

When you come to think, there's *Curly in Oklahoma* and *Sky in Gyny and Dolls*, so perhaps *Lucky*, just *Lucky*, isn't such a strange name for the hero of *The Lucky Kid*. The new young people's musical by Alan Durman and Annette Laws is set in the Wild West anyway. And in its evocation of that land where anything went, quite a lot did. We knew *Lucky* was the hero the moment he walked on because he wore a spotless, figure-hugging white, but it came as a darned surprise to discover that the chief huddle, Ma Malade, was a woman ("Dung me if that doesn't just cock your pistol!") The off-stage chorus too, although that might have been expediency in the exciting first performance at

Hulyard High School, Luton, where Durman is Head of Music. Other than that, however, the show sensibly remained within Saturday matinee conventions. John Wayne would have known where he was. Backwater City had a bank, a saloon, a Marshall and not much else. The Deputy, the preacher and assorted molls, drunks, Indians and posse all did their stuff just as they should, with good performances from Martin Cottrell as the ultra-white hero, diminutive James Watts playing a bearded, pipe-smoking old-timer, and Janet Jones stepping in at the last moment as the do-gooding Miss Truist. Understandably, publishers are already interested in the work, although it is a pity that at the moment some of its rather whimsical dialogue does not live up to Durman's raucous music.

H D

## A VERY SPECIAL PRINTOUT

In March we published a special inset on 'Schools and Computers'. It featured an interview with Kenneth Baker, an article by Seymour Papert, the work of the Microelectronics Education Programme, the proliferation of computing languages and several more highly illuminating articles on the subject. Reprints of this 12-page supplement are now available at a cost of 70p each (including p&p).

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'The Queen of Sheba,' 1922, by Mark Gertler. From Holbein to Hockney: A History of British Art by Simon Wilson (The Tate Gallery and The Bodley Head £5.95) – a book 'for the general reader who wants a reference framework for his gallery visiting'.

## Take a tumble

Sitting one day in the theatre, laughing my head off like the rest of the audience as the four members of The People Show tumbled their way across the stage, I suddenly realized I was having a thought relevant to anybody connected with school drama: "Get 'em out of the gym and on to the stage."

In *Chabert*, the show of shows which keeps returning to The People Show repertoire, a seedy nightclub is suddenly transformed as they drag in a multi-transpalline from outside, a mattress descends from the flies, and the piano turns into a vaulting horse. Mark Long and Chahine Yavroyan shout and jump in the continuous action that has always made tumbling troupes an exciting act to watch. Emil Volk is a trained acrobat with enough control to turn an anguished face to the audience as he realizes that this time he is going to land flat. George Khan keeps a piano roll going and provides the final touch that sends the others sprawling.

Behind all this activity, as mentor and part-instigator, is a man The People Show programmes describe simply as "a genius". Johnny Hutch is 70. At the age of 13, his mother apprenticed him off to a troupe of Arab acrobats. "Arab acrobats teach you the hard way," he says. He stayed with them for five years, speaking a variety of languages since Arab acrobats aren't expected to be English, then went on to work with just about every variety possible before, at the age of 64, taking the acrobatics prizes at the 1976 Circus World Championships.

Humphrey Evans

The People Show can be contacted at 97 St John's St, London EC1.

## Daydream believer

Dynakid. Chadwell Heath High School.

The aim of this school production was to convey a few simple ideas to a young teenage audience in a way they would easily understand. It followed a fairly safe recipe for light-hearted children's entertainment, taking a group of boisterous 14 and 15-year-olds and giving them a good old-fashioned story of daydreaming schoolboy miraculously transformed into comic-book superhero. Add to this some songs, a handful of droll jokes, and some evergreen caricatures – the gossiping mother, the neurotic headmaster, the plodding detective and the dastardly villain – and you have an idea of what *Dynakid* is all about.

Written by John Harris of the school's drama department, the play had a message for today's youth. Andrew, the hero, doesn't want to end up on the "scrap heap" of un-

employment, but by becoming Dynakid he is simply escaping from real life. Common sense eventually prevails and he returns willingly to normality.

An entirely home-grown affair, the play made the best use of the obviously limited resources available. It has definite potential and is to be commended as an innovative enterprise. Unfortunately, on this occasion, production and direction were not as good as they could have been. This was largely compensated for by the actors' energy and enthusiasm. There were strong performances by the leading children, wickied playing up their adult roles – Andrew's long-suffering mother and the dotty headmaster were especially well observed – and there was the added attraction of a set of good songs deftly woven into an overelaborate plot.

Christopher Denvir

## Dial-an-act

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Heritage, a new package by the agency, sets out to provide stimulating drama and arts for schools, further education colleges or indeed anybody who wants to book. But, run by two teachers, its aims are largely educational. Schools are largely the focus, and other metropolitan schools are already booking parties by Mondor and Bagatelle. Famous Elizabethan doublets, work with 8 to 12-year-olds, including an Elizabethan fair with jugglers, tumblers, fire-eaters and one-act plays. The company is also producing the works of Jacobean dramatists in contemporary settings with accurate Elizabethan pronunciation, at present the best. Heritage is the seventeenth-century O and A level literature and syllabuses are especially well-served by their enterprising repertoire. Most of the performers are teachers and have devised programmes for audiences of all ages. In *The Golden Age*, the Lewis Carroll story, an introduction to the life of Shakespeare are both designed to appeal to children as young as seven. Several of the shows have detailed preliminary work sessions for teachers.

Hugh Denvir

Further information from Trevor Woolford, Artists International, Wigmore Street, London W1R 3AL.

## Notebook

British Music Yearbook 1982-83. Edited by Marianne Barton. Classical Music £8.50, 03063487.

The British Music Yearbook is the Library Association's Medal for the outstanding reference work of 1972 when it was first published. Now, 10 years on, four publishers later, its price has reverted to something close to its original. Classical Music publishers have achieved this by using microprocessor technology in its production, which should make for a cheaper and faster future edition.

The familiar format largely remains – comprehensive notes on the past season, with annotated statistics on musical premises, concert hall, opera and dance stage, on radio and television for dance. Section two "Reference and Guidance" – contains articles on music and the law, insurance, rights, education and useful data on such problems as public transport.

The remaining five sections of the directory lists on everything from government offices to where to find Mormons might prefer to say it is comprehensive. Reference material is retained to anything other than established "classical" repertoire, to say the least, and the misleading. Overall, 20 of the 60 pages are devoted to two-page synopses and commentaries on 25 plays and inevitably such brevity curtails their value. John Russell Brown writes with clarity and insight in part one, and his classification of modern British drama into six

## Teachers for good

Heather Neill meets the Education Officers at the National and RSC

"I am doing a project on the National Theatre. Please send me everything you've got."

Anyone who thinks being an Education Officer for a major theatre company is a creative person's dream, a chance to enhance the lives of young people, to change the cultural drift in favour of the five and vital as opposed to the mass and vulgar should be forced to recognize, though, that the job involves an uphill struggle to reach those who really need contact – and a postbag full of requests like the one quoted above. The world, it seems, is full of ill-prepared students desperately trying to meet deadlines by relying on godmothered professionals to provide material as if by magic.

Tony Hill, who has been at the Royal Shakespeare Company for little over a month, admits he has so far been shielded from this by publicity staff. Kevin Cahill, after six months at the National, has decided to spend some time with his assistant Carol Winters, producing information sheets on various topics designed to answer the most frequent requests more simply and so free him from a time-consuming task to get on with what really matters.

What matters for both these young men is to make theatre accessible to young people who will

request came in for help on Pinter. "I'd taught Pinter to A level for a few years. I'd got my own ideas on him, so I said I'll come down and talk to you and do a practical session as well."

Kevin Cahill and Tony Hill know that the task they have undertaken is not a simple one. Both have long-term objectives which involve creating a relationship between their theatres and the network of schools and colleges all over the country, but meanwhile both must respond to the day to day needs which emerge in what is, after all, untried territory. No other education officers have undertaken so amorphous a task. The nature of the job in each case will be determined by the approach of the first incumbents.

Tony Hill, who has been a teacher, youth theatre organizer and county adviser in Leicestershire and Northampton, has the complication of a two, even three way split, the annual Newcastle tour being nowadays an integral part of the RSC's work, especially in educational matters. Given the time of year, (the RSC visit is February 21 to April 2) this is, perforce, where he will begin. Brigid Larmour, a young RSC director is to be the "common reference point" for events. There will be fewer straight "question and answer" visits by actors to schools, more structured workshops and –



Michael Bogdanov with students during Macbeth rehearsal.

(once pragmatism is advisable) be the audience of the future. In other words, the process should be designed: the theatre must benefit, but so must the individual or group who asks for help in the form of information about actors, producers or playwrights or, more practically, workshops involving actors, designers, technicians, or the Education Officer himself.

Both the RSC and the National have attempted educational experiments in the past, but these have been either haphazard and uncoordinated or unmistakably an offshoot of marketing. Now there is a teacher in residence in each company. Not an ex-teacher, either. Tony Hill says, "That's what I am, a teacher – and I'll continue to be so" while Kevin Cahill takes the opportunity to lead a class with clarity, as he did recently when a

jigs at the word – a "mini-festival" on the lines of last autumn's successful W H Smith Festival in Stratford. This will take the form of a week of special events at the Giltbeek Studio, from which Tony Hill hopes to gain feedback from experienced RSC collaborators which will equip him to take a more active part himself in next year's Newcastle visit.

Kevin Cahill, experienced actor and lecturer, has so far eschewed the festival approach, preferring to build his contacts during tours, through local advisers, and to consolidate links forged previously, notably last year when Michael Bogdanov took his workshop production of *The Cenci* to the National Theatre. The new NT schools production, *Macbeth*, was observed in the making by various youngsters from Tower Hamlets, not potential

drama students, but young people who were "not necessarily predisposed to get a lot out of it" to quote the internal report of the project. Some of the group were, ultimately, sufficiently motivated to give up, unmarked, a day of their half-term to investigate the theatre armory.

There have already been workshops, theatre days, lectures, careers advisory sessions (given free by people from various theatre departments in different regional requests), informal school visits and background packs to productions to add to well-established IEA and other London borough ticket schemes at the NT. Hopes for the future include more children's plays in the theatre and more structured workshops in schools, perhaps involving a couple of leading actors from a current production. Kevin Cahill is very systematic, always asking the efficient teacher's questions about aims and purposes but always open to whatever the next post might bring.

Tony Hill is still feeling his way, but already there are plans for next year. These include theatre days at the Barbican which will consist of workshops and the chance to see a witness performance. Teachers have put up some money for these. Both the RSC and the National encourage their education departments to seek sponsorship. While both companies demonstrate a degree of commitment to educational development in having used these appointments neither has a great deal of money to spare.

Meanwhile the staff at the Barbican, as yet unaided by Mr Hill, have set about making their first anniversary significant in the community around them. One year on, sponsored by BP, is an attempt to draw people into the Barbican from the local community by they flat dwellers of City communities. In an attempt to break down the Barbican's image as an alien and confusing place, the emphasis will be on youth, morning sessions for junior age children, afternoon for secondary and evenings for the general public. Jenny Mackintosh, who has organized the programme, says she has employed a "scatter gun technique", taking up ideas from the company and using contacts with schools whenever possible. Talents within the company will get an airing they otherwise might not: actors working in schools, as painters or musicians, young would-be directors getting a chance. There are some intriguing offerings, including a new play called *Leaves With Us* at lunch times, an *Orchestra* – a participation show for juniors, *Acting and the Art of Greengrocery*, a workshop with Roger Rees (March 1, 2.30pm), Four-sided Quiz between the RSC and Arsenal footballers (March 7, 3.30pm), other workshops, films, backstage tours and two discussion evenings. *The Arts in London* (February 21, 7.30pm) and *Fiddling While Rome Burns?* about popular theatre (February 22, 7.30pm).

One Year On, February 21 – March 16, Information 01-628 2295/628 9760. Booking 01-628 8795.

## Theatre digest

A Short Guide to Modern British Drama. By John Russell Brown. Heinemann Educational Books £2.95. 0 435 18372 9

One hundred pages would seem all too short for even the shortest of guides to modern British drama; when this is effectively reduced to 40, the *Guide* becomes little more than a monograph. The remaining 60 pages are devoted to two-page synopses and commentaries on 25 plays and inevitably such brevity curtails their value. John Russell Brown writes with clarity and insight in part one, and his classification of modern British drama into six

Robin Rook



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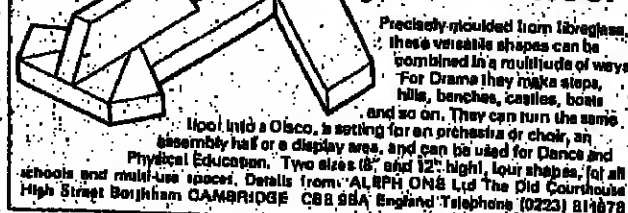


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## Box of delights

The robot are just right - witty, irreverent, recognisable characters. It's a lively, funny performance with imaginative sets and lighting. Only the music, high on rhythm but low on tune, seemed strained at times, like weak tea.

The plot is simple. The language is not. Nod off and you're lost. Clancy, Anansi and Crow speak a sort of mock Stoppard with a positively Restorationist passion for insides. In fact, says Barter, Spiderman's



A scene from Anansi

quest is as much about the development of language as anything else.

First and foremost however, it is entertainment and in line with Barter's principles. "Like the Victorians I believe children's theatre should interest, entertain and occasionally instruct."

Caryl Jenner's inspired post-war creation has given three decades of children a wide experience of theatre. Myth, magic and musicals interspersed with knock-about comedy, adventure and tears. Schools participate, there are travelling performances and drama workshops and, since Barter, integrated theatre for deaf and hearing children and workshops for the four to seven year olds.

Tha formulo has hardly changed

since Jenner's day, he says, only emphasis. With the arrival of Malcolms Gibbes, as artistic director in 1973, it shifted from being a commission the best. Thus the hour, Helen Creswell and friends. Last year saw a new Aiken play, Moonlight, by Wood's Meg and Meg musical, Campbell's Asterix and the

Tom McGrath has written *The Phone Box*. That is a significant event around Ayr, a town hitherto famed more for its honest men and bonnie lasses than for the establishment playwrights that write for its primary schools. Nor is Tom McGrath the writer you would most expect to see rubbing knees with primary one and two, for, of the string of credits to his name that include *Laurel and Hardy* and *Animals* he is probably best known for *The Hardman* the dramatic study of the criminal career and early prison life of Jimmy Boyle, Glasgow's best-known ex-con.

Getting this whale of a writer into the primary classrooms has been a great catch for Edward Jackson, administrator of the local theatre company known as Borderline. Ask him the meaning of the name and he will patiently explain that his community theatre works the theatrical no-man's-land between the established theatre and the great unknown, and he is never happier than

ground, a quiet room where children can read or draw, and a delightful cafe known as the Polka Pantry designed like an old-fashioned train. There is also an exquisite collection of puppets, an exhibition of toys, model theatres, dolls and Punch and Judy booths.

Seeing a play performed, getting the feel for it, being involved, participating (which is exactly what the audience at Polka do) is the most effective method of helping a child learn and retain information. As Ms Verker said, "Craft education is underestimated in schools today. At Polka, children can become involved in the practical aspect of theatre in the making of puppets and props in the workshops as well as enjoying a performance. Drama encompasses so many arts and senses that there is always some aspect which will appeal to a child and encourage him to 'have a go'. It's marvelous to see shy, self-conscious children really come out of themselves here. They feel inspired and stimulated. They want to do well and they want to learn."

But the work does not stop here. Polka has been carefully and thoughtfully designed to suit all the requirements of the handicapped child. From the construction of a lift and ramps to the height of workshop benches and seats in the auditorium, the disabled child can use all the facilities on offer. They run workshops especially for the disabled. Drama therapy is vital and Polka emphasizes that they must not

only be given the same opportunity as the able-bodied child but also be treated the same. At present they run mime shows for the deaf and equip them with a script before seeing a play, and run sound plays for the blind with much emphasis on touch and smell.

Polka has recently held a competition to find the best play written for children. Sainsbury sponsored the competition, the results of which are to be announced at the end of February. The winning play will be published and then performed by Polka and the successful playwright will receive £1,000. Polka were delighted by the enormous response (over 270 scripts flooded in) and will be able to use some of the extremely good runners-up in their repertoire.

For further information on the Polka Children's Theatre contact them at 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 or telephone 01-543 4888.

Angela Rose

## Spot on for fun

Tucked away in the depths of South West London is one of the most exciting theatres in Britain. The Polka Children's Theatre in Wimbledon offers children a world of fantasy, colour and magic. It both entertains and educates. Polka puts on plays, puppet shows, has performing clubs, workshops and recreational activities. Children of all ages and abilities are catered for in a relaxed but stimulating atmosphere.

Polka was the brainchild of Richard Gilt who opened it 15 years ago. It is a charity, relying heavily on sponsorship and donations. There is a touring company plus a team of resident actors. The plays are performed by either actors or marionettes or both, and are equally entertaining and educational. As Judy Verker, Press Officer pointed out, "Polka works to an extremely high standard, something which you do not often find in children's theatres." It maintains a fine balance between innovative ideas, and tools firmly steeped in tradition. Children can watch the puppets being made by Polka's own craftsmen and then go into the workshops and learn the processes for themselves. While the plays are being performed they can see how they are operated.

Many of the plays for the older children are based on the classics or have a strong historical theme, as for example the forthcoming *Julius Caesar* for 8 to 14 year olds. Within Polka there is also a play-

## Call to arms

*Drama in Education: A Curriculum for Change*. Report of the 1981 NATD Conference. Edited by John L. Norman. NATD/Cmbale Press. £4.95. 0 90635 09 9.

The third annual conference of the National Association for the Teaching of Drama, held at the University of Keele in April 1981, was a sober, serious affair dedicated to furthering the claim of Drama in Education to an "undeniable status as the heart of the school curriculum". *Drama in Education: A Curriculum for Change*, the recently published conference report, is therefore something of a manifesto; a record of the three days' serious work but also a primer for the ordinary classroom teacher anxious that drama should not become more than a Christmas subject.

For more, John L. Norman's opening paper goes as far as to suggest that it is "not merely a subject but rather a view of education per se". Later papers develop this theme in tandem with the other central concern of the thinking-drama teacher, the establishment of quantifiable aims, objectives and standards for the subject. On this too Norman has much of value to say. Although the report cannot recreate the model lesson he taught during the conference to demonstrate his "Cyclical Framework for Viewing the Drama Process", the document itself is a provocative attempt at the formal evaluation of classroom drama work.

Norman's papers, together with one each by Laurence Stephouse ("Drama as a Discipline of Thinking") and Michael Young, make up the bulk of the report. Young's paper, indeed, "Drama and the Politics of Educational Change", a typically embattled call to arms, makes a fitting end to a book that should provoke heated staffroom discussion.

## Whale among tiddlers

Brian Hayward visits Borderline theatre company

ances in primary schools, on an integrated drama project. The company recognize that "teaching is teaching, but actors are only actors, and they present their performance to the children knowing that their performance is merely an experience, like a nature ramble or a radio programme, that a willing teacher can use as an educational tool."

At the outset, the company depends on the help of Hugh Peterson, the primary adviser for Ayr, who mediates the wishes of the teacher, and monitors and evaluates the choice of theme, and its treatment. This year the discussions came up with the idea of "vandalism and the care of the environment". Back came Tom McGrath with the idea for *The Phone Box*.

This particular item of British Telecom is an archetypal Borderline location, set between a large housing estate, "The Old Town", and what used to be called "the countryside". The phone box is the meeting place for a gang of three, and the

play is about their relationship with each other, and with the adults who come to use the phone. The phone box conveys both the real and metaphorical need for communication and contact. Throw in the fact that the gang and the adults add up to a representative slice of contemporary attitudes to vandalism and conservation, and you have the play from the teacher's point of view. All that is missing is the visual and humorous treatment that will entertain primary one and upward, and keep them watching and thinking.

Company and author are making every effort to get the mixture right. The ideas are agreed with the adviser, and the actors work with the writer in rehearsal. The production is then tested in a workshop with a representative audience, and the reactions measured. There is no condescension in playing to six-year-olds. "Children are not anything like us naive as we would like to believe," says Edward Jackson. "They are just little people."

Otherwise, cost keeps the primary tour to the Ayr division. There is a demand by teachers, and a willingness on the part of the company, for an extended tour, but although the Arts Council have offered a "pound for pound" incentive grant, the poverty of the I.E.S.s keeps them at home.

Nevertheless, the work goes on, maybe only for one month in twelve at present, but Edward Jackson has a dream of a full-time, specialist children's theatre, for children, all-out children, and by quality playwrights. Tom McGrath may just be the first step in that long journey.



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## Entente cordiale

from *Zigzag-Zogger*. They're just not on when you've only got a cast of ten. However, it's all been sorted out now.



One of the masks made by students

All *The World's A Stage*, the shorter of the party's programmes was previewed for parents before the party left. The 90 minute show begins with Jacques' speech from *As You Like It*. First recited, then mimed and acted by the whole company, it sets the informal, studio style of the production. It is followed by a varied selection of modern poetry and several short playlets.

The party is taking two separate programmes devised by Don Hendy from material requested by the French authorities. "We did have some problems with their choice of texts," he admits. "The French knew exactly what they wanted and had chosen some very obscure poems and massive crowd scenes."

all linked together with music ranging from classical to electric rock. The programme ends, not with a scene from *Zigzag-Zogger* as the French would have liked, but with Hendy's own dramatization of Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale*.

"There are a lot of similarities between Chaucer's Middle English and even modern French," he explains. "Besides, *The Pardoner's Tale* allows us to use masks and the whole company involved. It's the liveliest and most elaborate part of the programme; the other scenes have intentionally been kept as simple as possible. The cast wear simple black costumes and with a minimum of props since everything they will need has had to be taken from England and carried by the actors along with more than ten thousand copies of the programme."

Rehearsed in just three weeks, as not to interfere with *O and Level work*, both shows conclude with a song-song. The French have specifically requested a set of traditional English songs and dances. "There's a Hole in My Bucket, Dear Liza", "London's Burning", "Maybe It's Because I'm a Loner" and, strangely, "Auld Lang Syne".

Hugh David

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## BOOKS

## Western sequel

Philosophy in the Twentieth Century, by A. J. Ayer.  
Weidenfeld and Nicholson £12.50.

This history was originally conceived as a sequel to Bertrand Russell's *A History of Western Philosophy* but, as the author points out, it trespasses on some of Russell's territory and it covers the ground with less concern for social and political detail. There are other differences too. The surveyor is closer to his subjects; the text is more allusive and probably more difficult for the non-professional; the tone is not so consistently sardonic, nor the style so reliably entertaining.

Still, this is faint criticism. For Russell's model is, in its way, a majestic achievement. Besides, there are many positive features which Ayer's book shares in common with its predecessor. The writing is brisk, the argument vigorous, the judgment fearless.

The opening chapter discusses recurrent philosophical problems and the sense in which philosophy makes progress. Three major debates are picked out as of special importance: realism versus idealism, rationalism versus empiricism and intuition versus pluralism. Ayer argues that philosophy advances such debates so far as it achieves clarity and consensus about how the problems should be posed and about the features which respectable responses should possess.

Ayer has an excellent, extended chapter on Moore and Russell and this is followed by chapters which deal in turn with pragmatism; positivism; the post-war developments associated with Wittgenstein, Carnap and Ryle; and the various

attempts to argue a physicalist theory of mind. Together with a final chapter on more recent figures of philosophical importance, they cover the mainstream of English-speaking philosophy. There are two other chapters, one on R. G. Collingwood, the major non-analytical English philosopher of the century, and the other on continental thinkers: this contains a useful, sympathetic discussion of Merleau-Ponty and some harsh words - more schoolmasterly than masterly - on Heidegger and Sartre.

Ayer gives a helpful and well placed account of Broad's theory of mind but he fails, surprisingly, to relate it to the later physicalist views which he discusses. More seriously, he displays impatience with those later views and is much too quick in his dismissal of them. This is a pity since the views in question - broadly speaking, functionalist in tendency - are at the forefront of current discussion.

So far as English-speaking philosophy goes, there are two major omissions in the book. The first, mentioned by Ayer, is recent moral - and political - philosophy. The other is unmentioned and perhaps more surprising. It is philosophy of science, in the sense in which this is not just equivalent to epistemology. Its neglect is strange in a philosopher who characterizes his discipline as the study of evidence.

*Philosophy in the Twentieth Century* will not have the success of its Russellian model but it is a respectable companion volume. The book is a story told by protagonist and it has the interest and value of an expert witness's report.

Phillip Pettit

## Self-knowledge

*Introduction to Social Research*, by A. B. Blacklock and H. M. Blacklock, Jr.  
Prentice-Hall International £8.95 and £5.95.

*The Uses of Social Research*, by M. Bulmer.  
George Allen and Unwin £12.95 and £5.95.

*Social Science Research and Public Policy-Making*, A. Reipprahl, Edited by D. B. P. Kallen, G. H. Kowse, H. C. Wagenaar, J. J. J. Kloppege and M. Vorheek.  
NFER-Nelson £7.95.

*Ethics and Social Science Research*, by P. D. Reynolds.  
Prentice-Hall International £7.95.

*Social Research Ethics*, Edited by M. Bulmer.  
Macmillan £15.00 and £6.95.

Social investigation, in Edward Shils' phrase, is a kind of moral conviviality - a method of collective self-knowledge. It can be used and therefore it can be abused. Here are five new books on these uses and abuses. The one with which to begin is *Introduction to Social Research*. I know of no better elementary account of the logic and nature of social analysis. This is a second edition, revising and bringing up-to-date the 1970 original. The Blacklocks are careful not to assume that the reader already possesses their own statistical sophistication. Instead they move methodically and in clear tight prose through the process of research from its context through theory construction, and types of measurement, the design of inquiry, the principal methods of data collection and analysis, and the use of results for policy formulation. It is not only an essential introduction for students; it offers a clear picture for non-social science readers of social-

ly. Mysterious words and phrases like multivariate analysis, interactive effects, ratio scales, or probability samples are carefully and intelligently explained in an ordered exposition. An excellent beginner's guide, it would save many a teacher from confusion as to the reliability and validity of the latest research report on, say, do schools matter? Social research is a large, and perhaps daunting, extent is funded by governments. Is it any use? Too often in contemporary Britain a negative answer is given out of ignorance. But no one could read *The Uses of Social Research* and fail to emerge without a more informed view of the complexity of the question. Martin Bulmer has been responsible for editing a series of books in recent years on the methods of social enquiry and is a respected authority. Here he has provided a useful summary of the history of applied research in Britain from early in the nineteenth century against which he considers most of the main problems of the relation between social science and government. The picture of a subtle bargain between two different but partly complementary interests emerges clearly. Within that bargain the potential utility of a social science (properly balanced theory and its application) remains to be understood and exploited.

*Social Science Research and Public Policy-Making* conveys much the same message, but with a focus more on educational research and rather less coherently, as is typically the consequence of putting together the proceedings of a conference. Relations between social research and public policy normally raises ethical issues in one form or another. But ethical considerations are more or less acutely present in any social enquiry at each of its stages from conception to dissemination. *Ethics and Social Science Research* is a competent American introduction to the literature. Martin Bulmer's collection of essays, *Social Research Ethics*, concentrates on covert participant observation - a set of methods which minimize conscious cooperation from those who are being studied. It has made contributions to social scientific knowledge, as D. L. Rosenhan shows in his chapter "On Being Sane in Insane Places". But its ethical difficulties are formidable. As Bulmer concludes, the sociologist who thinks of using covert participant observation whether in a school, a factory, or a prison should consider carefully that the method may be ethically objectionable and scientifically unnecessary.

A. H. Halsey

## Perceptions

If the young only would, if the only could. Learn what it is like through *Listening Ears* (Blacklock and Blacklock, House of Education £5.95), a collection of personal memories of schooling written by teachers and Cambridge tutors in Blacklock and Cambridge. It is a book for teachers just as they did themselves. A father makes sure his son knows his letters have to wait to be read until his wife gets home. A mother writes to her daughter: "your education is the most important thing in your life and you must get it through life. It is a gift, well to say 'I have years ahead of me' but believe me, the years soon catch up on you."

Meanwhile, up the road in north Hants, a group of schoolgirls complain (All Bricked Up, 25p from Bassetsea Community Action) there's no respect, status, and particularly no money to be had at school. School is geared to teachers who are geared to examinations which are irrelevant to life. If both these perceptions of schooling are valid, both sides are in understanding. Add together the overriding importance of establishing identity and the intense restraints of school life; teenage lack the experience to see the relevance of what's offered at school and teachers are just a mixed bag of variable achievements, unrepentant spoils in their charges, hypocritical gnomes.

In search of more understanding, publicizing your ideas is certainly a useful beginning. It was this that motivated too the girls whose voices we hear in *Being a Girl in the Family and Being a Girl in the Classroom* (Bassetsea Community Action, 25p). These are direct transcripts of discussions about the unfairness and stereotyping girls feel they receive from society in general and their families in particular. Mothers especially being seen as favouring their sons and exploiting their daughters.

No More Kidding (50p) is Bassetsea Community Action's edition of text, photographs and press cuttings on "young people, participation and power". Its plea is for the young to be valued and treated with responsibility far real participation in decision making on the issues which affect them rather than being the current sham tokenism. Here again the expression of the ideas is a blow for better understanding.

Jessica Savage

\* Bassetsea Community Action, 27 Winders Road, London SW11

## Following classic examples

*Catullus*, Edited by G. P. Goold.  
Duckworth £24.00. 0 7156 1435 5.  
E9.95. 1710 9.

*Juvenal: Sixteen Satires in the Ancient Harlot*. Translated by Steven Robinson.  
Corgene £8.95. 85635 324 R

Goold's attractive edition of Catullus makes his work accessible even to those with little Latin. The text (which differs radically from the usual literal prose translation (which hardly attempts to mitigate the rigour of Catullus's obscenity) is printed in face, and further assistance (but not a commentary on the Latin text) is given in the Annotations. An account of Catullus's metres contains some useful English mnemonics.

Steven Robinson's translations of the XVI Satires of Juvenal into English hexameters are very faithful to the originals, but he has made his task easier and the reader's more difficult by throwing overboard conventional English word-order, a policy he justifies in a very long,

discursive and obscure introduction, the ultimate purpose of which is unclear to me, but which, for all its Sibylline self-confidence, is riddled with errors of fact.

*The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*, by G. E. M. de Ste Croix.  
Duckworth £38.00. 0 7156 028 1.  
£15.00. 1701 X.

Do not be misled by the title. Geoffrey de Ste Croix's magnum opus is now available in paperback at a price that works out as a paltry 1pence a page, does not deal with some narrow and arcane phenomenon, but with the whole of Greek and Roman history from the eighth century BC to the seventh AD (largely unconscious) struggle between the privileged classes and the Rest. In which the former win hands down, but in winning alienate the latter so thoroughly as to negate their interest in defeating the system which oppressed them.

Keith McColl

## BOOKS

## Second time round

*Siblings*, By Judy Dunn and Carol Kendrick.  
Grant McIntyre £14.95, and £7.95.  
First Child, Second Child, By Bradford Wilson and George Edington.  
Sovereign Press £7.95.

The trouble is, I have this problem with the word "sibling". It has a similar one, well known and gleefully traded upon in my family, with the word "broth", but that is another, entirely irrelevant, story. This being so, to be faced with a book actually called *Siblings*, and which presents the dreaded word 13 times in the first two pages is a bit like being asked to listen to a quadraphonic recording of somebody scratching the bottom of a saucepan with his fingernails.

However, prejudice unjustly declared, I must manfully to my task, for am I not an Only Child? And am I not therefore, according to Wilson and Edington, "prone to put up a brave, stoic front while keeping your deepest hopes, fears and opinions to yourself."

*Siblings* is derived from a series of observations, made at intervals over 15 months, of 40 firstborn children, the observation period being timed to cover the birth and early development of a second child in each family. The aim was to gather information about the way the older children reacted to their new status as brothers and sisters and thus to provide systematic data in an area where much advice - often claimed as "expert" - is already proffered.

The results shed interesting and helpful light on a well known area of family concern. For example, although advisers have commonly made parents feel responsible - perhaps even guilty - when there has been jealousy and disturbance, these authors point to other findings which modify this easy allocation of blame. Thus, in what sense can we blame a mother for having a very close and sensitive relationship with her firstborn, even though this very closeness can cause problems when the new baby comes?

Facts and subjects are clearly cross-referenced so that a project can easily be extended. The suggestions for listening music include a section on important pop groups and their styles. The book offers a splendid panorama of all aspects of music from the Stone Age to the present day. Furthermore there is a multitude of ideas that can be developed into practical and exciting music making in the classroom. The care with which the authors have incorporated pop music into the total scene should ensure the popularity of this book with young people.

Shirley Winfield

## Sound advice

*The Oxford First Companion to Music*, By Kenneth and Valerie Melchior.  
Oxford University Press £7.95.

This book, intended as a reference book for children under 14, is packed with fascinating information, provided by a lively text and an abundance of excellent illustrations. It is arranged in seven sections, five of which are published separately (price £1.50 each) for classroom use.

"Music round the World" introduces the reader not only to music from many countries but also to jazz and pop, and includes a section on records and recording. Here we learn that Edison's first recording on the phonograph was "Mary had a little lamb", and that the Beatles have so far sold a staggering 600 million singles and over 100 million LPs.

Another section "Singing and Dancing" explains clearly, with the aid of diagrams, how vocal sound is produced. The reader is taken through the process of producing an opera with suggestions and information about good starters. The many dances described range from the records to the twist, the pavan to rock 'n' roll with sections on dance films and ballet.

*The English Medieval Landscape*, Edited by Leonard Cantar.  
Croom Helm £12.95.  
0 7099 0707 9.

*The Transformation of Rural England, 1580-1800. A Study in Historical Geography*, By R. A. Butlin.  
Oxford University Press £2.50.  
0 19 874046 8.

"Elegantly piecing together a watch from all its parts except the spring," Professor Butlin (Loughborough) describes just the kind of work that Professor Cantar (Loughborough, Education) has edited; and he proceeds to supply the missing component. Not that either professor would for a moment question the value of the other's efforts; watch-springs, after all, would be pretty pointless without watches.

What with Beresford and St. Joseph zooming overhead, Hoskins and the faithful plodding and scratching in the undergrowth, and Daily leading scores of others through the paperwork, there is no shortage of books on medieval his-

torical geography. *The English Medieval Landscape's* claim to originality lies in its separate treatment of each component: fields, forests, manoreries, roads and so on. Though introduction and conclusion briefly survey the landscape in totality, regional distinctiveness largely slips by unnoticed. The approach shows up the complexities, varieties and sophistications of medieval institutions, qualifying and challenging easy generalizations, and the inevitable repetition serves to bring out clearly some general patterns of advance and decay.

In contrast to this practical description Robin Butlin, having already passed this way himself,

theorizes, ponders and conceptualizes. A "biggest", he calls *The Transformation of Rural England*, a brief critical study of explanations propounded by assorted historians, economists, geographers and Marxists for certain crucial changes. Once past a defensive thicket of wordy generalization we are quickly into a compact and valuable commentary on recent work, enlivened by some shrewd quotations. Perhaps the neat comparison of open-field system and camel, each displaying the advantages and drawbacks of committee design, best sums up a key finding of both books.

Tom Corfe

## Regional history

There are strong reasons for looking at archaeology on a regional basis despite the obvious difficulties in establishing a total grasp of all the necessary periods of history and pre-history. Unfortunately *The Archaeology of South West Britain* (Susan Pearce, Collins £13.50) is not quite as good as it might have been, given the author and the standards

Ian Caruana

## History Books from HMSO

**Castles: A Guide for Young People**  
Hugh McGregor

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P. H. Humphries

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## MEDIA



## Sentimental journey

Frances Farrer on 'In Front of the Children'

CHILDREN'S TELEVISION  
In Front of the Children  
BBC1

Wednesday's 50-minute celebration of 60 years of children's broadcasting offered something for everyone as they say in showbiz. There were memories and anecdotes, clips from *Andy Pandy*, comments from the Controller. There were interviews with some of the original wireless broadcasters and film of their studios. We were reminded of the early radio work of stars such as Gordon Jackson, Stanley Baxter, and Tammy Trout. There was reminiscence with Kathleen Garscadden - or Anti (Auntie) Cyclone, as she was then. There were glimpses of Larry the Lamb and Margaret Thatcher.

It was all done rather ponderously, as self-congratulation often is. One problem was the use of John Craven as presenter, interviewer and linkperson. Mr Craven's *Newsround* is an excellent programme, deservedly popular. Mr Craven himself, however, is uncharismatic and an uninspired interviewer. This was a disadvantage in a programme overloaded with interviews.

Through these we were given nostalgic stories of early wireless broadcasting, of the degree of amateurishness and improvisation. "Well, then it got to be five o'clock," they recall, "so I went into the studio and put on a bit of music and then I told a story."

It became clear that these impromptu performances rapidly hardened into a set of conventions that are still with us today. From very early on, children were encouraged to do things, to have hobbies, and even to have adventures (as long as they were safe ones). In 1923,

young listeners collected enough silver paper to buy wireless sets for the children in Great Ormond Street Hospital. There were listeners' clubs. Children "wrote in". Some of them even appeared on the air. How like now!

More recent, television material was scammed through, and we who had been waiting throughout the first half of the programme for our most sentimental memories were only vouchsafed a few moments in the company of *Muffin the Mule*, *Bill and Ben*, and *Magic Roundabout*. Worst of all, no mention was made of *The Woodentops* surely the most compelling broadcast television between the 50s and *Smiley's People*.

*In Front of the Children* was cosy and Auntie-ish, complacent, comforting, slow and woolly. (Incidentally, the technical quality was well below BBC standard.) Generally speaking, it had all the delights and potholes of Memory Lane itself.

Same favourite characters - though sadly, no Woodentops appeared

## My very own story

William Dale looks at 'This is Me'

CHILDREN'S TELEVISION  
This is Me  
ITV, Mondays, 4.45pm

*This is Me* sounds like a good idea, but - judging by the first programmes - it falls to take off. Its intention is to get children who in some way are unusual to describe their lives in their own words. The range of children is imaginative and intriguing, but the final product is not.

"This" is not just "Me", of course; it is also a film crew, a director, an editor, and several other people. However spontaneous the commentary may sound it is still a carefully constructed artefact, and the children themselves can certainly not be blamed for what emerges.

Restricting oneself to their own view of their lives puts a particular responsibility on the editing process: to bring out the ironic and contextual issues surrounding them; and this is where the series fails.

The first programme, for example, looked at the life of one of the smaller and younger members of Musical Youth, the recently successful reggae band. It showed the

potentially, highly charged situation of this group of young black kids surrounded by white publicity people making a film - and one dreaded looking in the mirror. But it lacked the ingenuity to probe any more deeply, leaving us with the child's own ingenuous prattle about his highly vulnerable situation.

The children that I watched the programmes with, having been enthralled to see this one, stopped paying any attention after five minutes. It didn't even manage to establish whether the band can actually play their instruments! They were more gripped by the second programme, feeling some empathy for the young girl on a dialysis machine; and the makers did succeed in bringing out the boredom and frustration of her life. They succeeded too well, in fact; as my young friends pointed out, the girl kept repeating herself, over and over.

All in all, this series needs more, and deeper, consideration of its goals, and of the ambiguities and responsibilities involved. In setting up the appearance that the children concerned are telling their own stories,

## Mathematical points to be scored

Andrew Rothery on 'Johnny Ball's Maths Games'

ETV/RADIO  
Johnny Ball's Maths Games  
Radio 4, Fridays, 11.30am.  
Mathecore  
BBC 1, Fortnightly.

*Maths Games* is a series of ten 10-minute programmes for children aged 10-12 years. They would be useful with older primary-school juniors, or with younger pupils in secondary schools. The programmes consist of a series of short items: number puzzles, practical activities, interesting facts and various kinds of food for thought. Incidentally, they contain no games!

Johnny Ball is a personality well-liked by children. He speaks in a quiet, friendly and sympathetic way and the listener works with him, following instructions and trying out his suggestions. To follow the programmes satisfactorily, it is essential to use the worksheets contained in a cheap, BBC booklet which also includes programme notes and suggestions for further activities and reading.

## Fibonacci numbers

The material is extremely well chosen for the age range; the topics are interesting and each has a genuinely mathematical point. The early programmes contain some well-known number tricks and puzzles. Advice is given on how to add up the numbers 1-100, and how to use the Fibonacci numbers to convert miles into kilometres. Later programmes include some geometrical constructions, paradoxes and models to make. The final programmes centre around chance, calendars, and recreational topology.

It is not always easy to follow verbal instructions, so some supervision of the children will be needed. It is essential to work from a tape recording of the programme so that replays and pauses can be made. Sometimes Johnny Ball says "switch me off" so that the listener can cut out some paper slimes, or work out a problem.

*Maths Games* can be highly recommended as a valuable source of material for teachers wishing to enliven and enrich their pupils' mathematical work.

## high scores

*Mathscore*, reviewed in *The TES* last term, continues into the spring term. The very high quality of this series is maintained. Aimed at roughly the same age range as *Maths Games*, each *Mathscore* programme focuses on one topic. The topics contain a skilful blend of emphasis on conventional mathematics and enrichment material. The visual presentation mainly uses studio demonstrations with animated diagrams. It is very clear and straightforward.

*Mathscore* is really two series. *Mathscore One* covers the same topics as *Mathscore Two*, but is somewhat easier. This gives teachers a choice of level and enables combinations of programmes to be arranged as necessary.

Longman publish a 48-page book by Marion Rosen (£1.75) to accompany the series. The book provides similar work in textbook format, though it is not essential to following the programmes. The separate teachers' notes explain the mathematical background to the topics, and discuss the value of each programme.

## On their bikes

Terry Martin on craft, design and technology

RADIO  
The Bicycle Programme  
BBC Radio 4, Mondays, 2.20 pm.

This series of five programmes (one for teachers followed by four for pupils) is one of several new media ventures into the important area of Craft, Design and Technology. Aimed at pupils in the 10-13 age range it achieves impact and immediacy by adopting a topic approach centred upon the bicycle. The programmes are written and presented by the producer Tony Staples, enthusiastically supported by Sheila Gibby and Mark Curry, and have been prepared with help from both RoSPA and NCST.

The programmes need to be pre-recorded, and played back as directed, to allow time for discussions and activities. The first programme and the first few minutes of the rest of the programmes contain teacher directed material, much of which is also covered in the notes. There are detailed instructions for the practical activities, with particular emphasis upon safety. Pupils are encouraged to ask open-ended questions, and at one stage to take a bicycle to bits to find out the answers.

The first pupil programme, "How it works" has the strongest technological emphasis, with important issues of design also considered. The craft or constructional aspects of the bicycle receive very little attention, although it is suggested later in the series that pupils could try to build up a bicycle for themselves out of old parts.

Pictorial aids provided by RoSPA are an essential accompaniment. The second pupil programme, "How it has changed", about the history of the bicycle, includes recorded com-

mentary from the Museum of British Road Transport in Coventry and assumes that the pupils have simultaneous access to some of this visual material. Further material to complement the teachers' notes is being produced at the National Centre for School Technology.

Bicycle maintenance receives careful consideration in the third pupil programme "Keeping it going", although opportunities are never lost to ask useful questions about materials and design considerations. A detailed introduction to current electricity, for example, could readily be based upon the in-depth experience of bicycle lights, and their dependence upon cells or dynamos.

In the fourth and final pupil programme "Making it safe", links with RoSPA are exploited. Teachers are encouraged to make contact with local Road Safety Officers, and to participate in the Cycleway scheme. Putting road safety in this technological context is a novel and potentially effective strategy. The respect which pupils gain for the bicycle as a product of design and technology will hopefully lead to a safer use of it on the road.

Pupils are finally presented with the ingenious design challenge: to invent a completely new kind of bicycle - and to decide what price they would sell it at.

The materials would seem to indicate that this can be a successful approach to an important curriculum area at junior level. Teachers are naturally apprehensive in trying out ideas which push their own expertise to the limits. This resource package could give them the confidence and encouragement to experiment, and thus to enrich their own as well as their pupils' experience.

## BRIEFINGS

radio &amp; tv

## For schools

Merry-Go-Round (Monday, 11.40 Wednesdays, 11.40 BBC1)  
A topical programme on world news shows eight and nine-year-olds how a story is handled by the media.

1...2...3...Go! (Monday, 11.40 Tuesday, 9.30 ITV)  
Children in their first year at school are given lots to see and using three, four and seven.

Lifeline (Monday, 14.20 VHF)  
A unit on "Choices and Decisions" features the Middlesex and the problems their teenage children encounter. Here 13 to 17-year-olds follow Paul as he tries to make his mind about smoking.

Middle English (Tuesday, 11.40 Thursday, 10.04 ITV)  
"News Story" follows the way a television reporter, in setting recording and editing written on Thames flood barrier for a local evening news programme.

History: Long Ago (Tuesday, 11.40 VHF)  
The first programme about Napoleonic Wars' exploits to twelve-year-olds who were the experiences of the ordinary soldier and sailor at two great battles.

Biology: Field Studies (Wednesday, 11.40 VHF)  
A series to stimulate awareness of environmental problems by showing 14 to 16-year-olds the ecology of a broadleaved wood.

The New Technology (Thursday, 9.30 VHF)  
What is the New Technology? Why is it important? Can industry survive without it? 16 to 19-year-olds learn some of the answers.

## General interest

Action makes the heart grow bolder (Friday, 18 Feb. 16.30 Radio 4)  
Dr Alan Mayson-Devis, of the Health Education Council presents Lynnam's guide to the prevention of heart disease.

Hammurabi Members (Thursday, 11.40 BBC2)  
How does the House of Commons work? A five part series interviews MPs to get an inside view of what goes on at Westminster.

Play Tennis (Friday, 9.25 BBC1)  
Derek Horwood introduces beginners to his step-by-step method of learning tennis. He begins with "Making contact" - holding the racket properly.

## Dinosaur dominance

FILM  
64,000,000 Years Ago  
111 minutes 25 seconds running time  
Made by the National Film Board of Canada.  
Education Media International, 25 Boleau Road, London W3 3AL.

This film attempts a re-creation of the late Cretaceous period towards the end of the age of dinosaurs and the rise of mammals. Animated miniature models are used to show the dinosaurs, both herbivorous and carnivorous forms, in their habitats.

There is little to follow in the animation, however, as the film doesn't really tell you a great deal about the supposed fauna of the period, but could be a bit of a relief to a theoretical approach to studying geological time, and evolution of life.

EXTRA  
VIDEO AND FILM

Below left: from 'The Custard Boys' (see page 35). Below left: from 'Down to Earth' by Tiverton School (see below). Right: from 'Baron Munchausen' (see page 35).

## Ideas that work

Liz Heron visits two schools which participated in the 'Let's Make a Film Festival'

Twenty schools had films screened at last year's "Let's Make a Film Festival" at the National Film Theatre, alongside work produced by children in youth organizations and in arts centres. The Festival, launched in 1966, is held every two years, not a competition, but work selected for screening must pass a sufficiently high standard for public showing. Last year's encouragement awards of £15 to each school or group producing a film showing evidence of serious effort, went to all who entered. There was a total of 60 films, with some film-makers putting forward two or three entries. In addition there's a £20 award for every film selected for screening (£20 in the case of 16mm films).

These are modest sums, but they can make a lot of difference to what are often tiny budgets. The whole aim of the Festival, which is sponsored and organized by the London Co-op and the Co-operative Retail Services, is to encourage children's filmmaking as an enterprise that can be undertaken on a small scale, even with the minimum of expertise. Entries should be no more than eight minutes long. As a public occasion the Festival gives children a definite goal and also provides a unique opportunity to see a range of work being produced by children all over the country.

What is taken in the first place to get film-making started in a school is either an enthusiastic teacher who organizes it as an extra-curricular activity, or else a place for film in the school curriculum. Tiverton School in Devon is fortunate enough to have both. Tiverton's two films screened at the 1982 Festival were made as part of extra-curricular activities; while the 1980 Festival showed a film made, as part of their course work, by pupils on the CSE Media Studies Course.

Tiverton School, some 15 miles from Exeter, has 1200 pupils and a light relief to a theoretical approach to studying geological time, and evolution of life.

the countryside as far north as Exmoor. It was a secondary modern until it went comprehensive five years ago. Media Studies began as a ROSLA course the year before. It has become increasingly popular and the film-making component led to spin-offs in other directions. Currently eight different films are in progress. Tim Arnold, head of Drama and Media Studies, has responsibility for all of these.

Media Studies pupils have time to plan the various stages of their small-group projects, and build up a grasp of filming and editing techniques. But for the term that made *Down to Earth* a lot had to be squeezed into a short period, so the process was rather different. A dozen of them had been meeting at lunchtimes for about a year, doing drama-based activities, before they decided to make a film, although some had already worked on a film as part of drama coursework. They shot *Down to Earth* in May 1982, when they were fourth-years. It took six weeks from first discussions to completion.

"The hardest thing was coming up with an idea that would work," one of the group recalled. There was general agreement about that. Although making a film entailed already acquired skills like acting and direction, it was new to be confronted with the limits of super-8 film and the confines of budget for film stock. In the end the twelve minutes of film shot before cutting cost around £40. After prolonged discussions, that turned out to be much more argumentative than with any of their previous projects, they settled on a live action fiction film with a plot hinging on mystery and horror. Fiction was a more obvious choice than documentary, which they felt would demand some background research and perhaps more self-discipline, and be less fun to do.

They did all the filming over one weekend. Armed with a rough shooting script that they'd walked through, Editing filled up most of

the following one. "The film was a group effort. No one really stood out," said Nicola Golby, who did most of the editing after only a few hours' practical introduction to cutting room techniques. Editing proved to be the most difficult technical skill to grasp and the one where the film-makers needed most help from Tim Arnold.

Familiarity hadn't dulled the film's novelty. When I watched it with the group in the classroom that does triple-duty as a studio and a workshop, there was a buzz of excitement among the audience. The plot is simple: a group of schoolgirls on a camping holiday visit a village church; despite warnings, one of them is lured up the belflower by a phantom presence and plunges to her death. Everyone hammed it up for all they were worth and obviously enjoyed it. Dialogue was improvised on the spot. The film provokes, more laughs than shivers, but it does display imagination and ingenuity, and some clever camera angles in classic horror style succeed in creating atmosphere.

The location, the suitably picturesque village of Cadeleigh, was chosen because one of the group, Selina Reed, lives there. That led to walk-on parts for the Reed family. And by all accounts a lot of other parents got involved over the weekend's filming, providing transportation and general assistance.

Tim Arnold is convinced that among the many benefits pupils derive from such projects, by far the most important are increased self-confidence through learning a practical skill that has a very definite end-product, and the experience of working on a collaborative project with their peers. On the Media Studies course live different groups are working on their own films.

Sarah Kelly, a fifth year, thinks that working in a small group (there are six in hers) makes it easier to get down to work and reach agreement over how things are done.

## UNILEVER FILMS

There are still 27 Unilever Films available. They are distributed by the Scottish Central Film Library, who are now the sole agent for all Unilever Films.

## Films available:

As others see you  
Bacteria  
Chemistry of soapless  
detergents  
Colloids  
Considering crystals  
Exploring chemistry  
Food preservation  
Genetics and plant  
breeding  
Hard Water  
I couldn't give a dinner,  
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FILMSCANIdeas that  
work continuedBefore filming they will have worked  
out their narrative on a series of  
storyboards, as well as using still  
photography as practice and prepara-  
tion.Practical film work and video go  
hand in hand with film study, so  
that there's a gradual development  
of awareness about a range of tech-  
nical and stylistic devices. "I watch  
all the films I see on television much  
more critically now," says Sarah.Primary schools are less likely to  
have basic film-making equipment  
than secondary schools - particularly  
those with a film component in the  
curriculum, where there will also be  
a budget allocation for film stock,  
albeit thinly stretched. At Langtons  
Junior School in Hornchurch, Essex,  
it has been money from the Parents'  
Association that has financed equip-  
ment and materials. Film-making is  
just one of many activities children  
can get involved in at lunchtime.There's also drama, chess, country  
dancing and several music groups.  
Fifteen children in all - 9 and  
10-year-olds - were invited to take  
part in the Film Club. John Bennett  
selected the children on the basis of  
how they would come together as a  
group, which was something he felt  
depended on levels of articulacy. He  
has been the head at Langtons for  
the past 2½ years and in his pre-  
vious school, Crowlands Junior  
School, had also organized children's  
film-making.Langtons film *Monday Morning* -  
which was screened at the  
last Festival, is a documentary about  
the job of the school secretary, Mrs  
Brotherton, as seen from the chil-  
dren's point of view. "One of the  
nims in making the film was for the  
children to learn about the job of a  
person they meet every day. I sug-  
gested a number of different people  
in the school and they settled on the  
secretary," Mrs Brotherton, far her  
part was a willing subject, clearly  
relishing her role.The film, which doesn't use synch  
sound, but has music and a series of  
voice-overs, accompanies Mrs  
Brotherton through her Monday  
morning routine: arriving at school,  
seeing the staff come and go as they  
carry keys, and the children as  
they deliver class registers, counting  
in the dinner money and supplying  
a first aid to a child with an injured  
knee. There's also a fantasy se-  
quence where she pursues holiday  
brochures during her coffee break,  
dreaming of far away beaches. What  
gives the film special character is the  
wittily observed detail catching andexaggerating Mrs Brotherton's man-  
nerisms."The children involved in produc-  
tion get quite a lot out of it. There's  
the discipline of working together,  
and a lot of discussion about what  
they want to say about a subject and  
how to express it in a way their  
peers can understand. They have to  
discuss it, write a script and walk it  
through."Film-making is a demanding pro-  
cess for children that age, not least  
because they have to maintain in-  
terest in something that doesn't pro-  
duce immediate results. By the end  
of the seven weeks the project  
lasted, a number of children had  
dropped out. Most enthusiastic  
among those still involved were  
Yvette Percival, Alison Taffs and  
Linda Passey, a sparky trio of  
friends who became absorbed in the  
film and virtually took it over.It was hard work, they said, parti-  
cularly because they had to do  
"homework" on the script. What  
they most enjoyed was filming, with  
each of them determined to do a bit  
of everything. "The hardest thing  
about it was holding the camera  
steady," says Yvette.They had to use a tripod to avoid  
shaking. They then learned about the  
limitations of super-8 film: "We had  
lots of ideas but we found it was  
difficult to do them all. We had  
too many ambitious really," said  
Linda. Alison had taken part in a  
film at the local arts centre, but  
film-making was entirely new for the  
others.Since *Monday Morning* - *Phew!*  
they've started work on other ideas.  
One was to be a film with pictures  
painted by their classmates, Jack-  
son-style, but that turned out to betoo difficult and was abandoned  
in favour of a horror story set in a  
school. They were just about to  
begin filming.There can be little doubt that the  
existence of the Let's Make A Film  
Festival plays a large part in fos-  
tering children's film-making, and a  
Co-op, shouldering the bulk of the  
financial and organizational respon-  
sibility for the two-yearly event. The  
National Film Theatre provides a  
venue and Festival facilities, and he  
heartily congratulated for the  
film, but although there's still a body  
and enthusiastic response to the fes-  
tival, the number of entries has  
actually declined since the es-  
tablishment.David Fairbanks, the fes-  
tival's organizer, is in no doubt about  
the reason: with the video explosion,  
fewer schools feel there's a need to  
acquire film-making equipment. He  
believes that video is easier to use  
and has faster results, but it would be  
pitiful if children lost the opportu-  
nity to learn the skills of film-making  
with all the team-work that the  
process entails. David Fairbanks  
says that the possibility of having a  
video section in the 1984 Festival is  
under consideration. However the  
main purpose of the Festival is to  
keep children's film-making alive  
and well. So perhaps now, more  
than ever, there's a need to reassert  
the value of what it has achieved  
and include a plea for even wider  
support.For information about the Let's  
Make A Film Festival contact: Co-  
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## Copyright catches

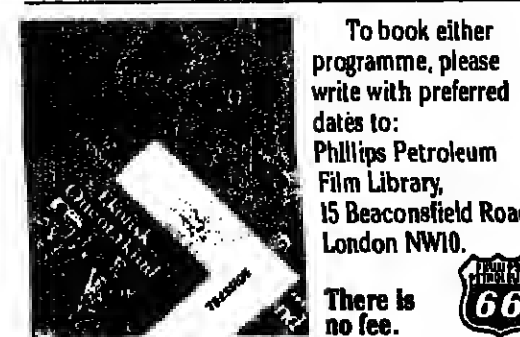
Can videocassettes of films be shown in schools? G. Crabbe  
hazards some adviceIt seems that hardly a day goes by  
without some new copyright issue  
being raised by the development of  
a new technology or, in the present  
case, of a novel marketing initiative  
resulting from a new technology. I  
am referring to the availability, for  
purchase, of videocassettes of films,  
including feature films through retail  
outlets.Traditionally, films have never  
been sold to the public but only  
leased to cinemas or hired to clubs  
and societies for public viewing. The  
rapid increase in the sale of video  
recorders for domestic use has been  
followed by a move by film produc-  
ers and copyright owners to transfer  
films to cassette in order to exploit  
this new market.Teachers were quick to realize that  
by purchasing cassettes a useful li-  
brary of films could be built up which  
would not only obviate the need to  
book ahead but also pay for itself by  
reducing expenditure on hiring fees,  
postage etc. Unfortunately, when the  
teacher opened the container it was to  
find a statement to the effect that the  
cassette was sold only for domestic  
playback in the home, thus,  
apparently, forbidding playback in a  
school and raising the question of  
whether such an embargo could be  
enforced.

Under the terms of the Copyright

Act 1956, the owner of the copy-  
right in a film has the right to control  
the public performance of the film  
and it has been established by case  
law that any performance outside  
the domestic environment is likely  
to be regarded as "public". The Act  
also stipulates however, that where  
a film is shown to the pupils and  
teachers as part of the normal activi-  
ties of a school this is not to be  
regarded as a public performance  
and permission is, therefore, not re-  
quired.Of course, until recently this was  
irrelevant as a school had to pay to  
acquire access to a copy of a film and  
the terms and conditions thus agreed  
to formed part of a contract enforce-  
able by law. The purchase of a cassette  
is a shop, however, entails no such  
licensing arrangement and the question  
arises whether the printed embargo on  
the cassette or container overrides the  
provisions of the 1956 Act which re-  
lates to performances in schools.The Council for Educational  
Technology has taken legal advice  
and it will probably come as no sur-  
prise that the position is ambiguous.  
There does appear to be clear au-  
thority for the view that a contract-  
ual obligation, such as a condition  
of sale, can override a statutory  
right given by the 1956 Act. In  
other words if a teacher enters intoa contractual obligation with the  
cassette supplier not to show the  
film outside the home then a per-  
formance in school would be outside  
as a breach of contract even though  
the performance would not have in-  
fringed the law of copyright because  
of this.On the other hand, a contract can  
only be enforced where both parties  
were aware of the conditions at the  
time, so if someone purchases a  
product with a certain use in mind and  
finds, when the time comes, that  
such use is forbidden by the terms  
of the contract, the contract cannot be  
enforced if it can be proved that at the time  
of the purchase the purchaser was not  
aware of the conditions.From this it would seem that the  
condition relating to domestic perfor-  
mance must be prominently displayed  
on the outer container (not on the  
cassette which is rarely inspected by  
the shop) or the retailer must make it  
clear before making the sale.  
To those teachers wishing to be  
safe, the answer is to purchase the  
cassette for school use the school  
must be to "avoid" notices on the  
printed notice and if the cassette  
does point it out then the teacher  
decline to purchase on that con-  
dition and shop elsewhere.G. Crabbe works for the Council for  
Educational Technology.Meeting at  
'the mickey'Archie Tait on the decline in children's  
cinemaDuring the 1950s and 1960s, chil-  
dren's matinees were run every  
Saturday morning in nearly every  
local Rank and ABC cinema in Bri-  
tain. The films shown there were  
the focal point of the meeting, but  
not necessarily the main reason for  
going: the matinee (or "the mickey")  
as it was known in my own locality  
was a meeting place for children  
from widely differing social back-  
grounds.Yet even within the highly res-  
tricted programmes, the audiences  
were highly selective: featurettes -  
usually highly moral tales of errant  
youngsters finally recognizing the  
wisdom, or at least the superior  
power, of parents and teachers -  
were simply rendered inaudible; any  
candour not bearing the Warner  
Brothers' "Merry Melodies" or  
"Looney Tunes" imprint were simi-  
larly subjected to bigoted abuse.  
Undivided attention to the movies  
was reserved for the serial, the  
dramatic peak of a two-and-a-half  
hour rammy which crossed the aes-  
thetic experience of the Roman Cir-  
cus with the social realities of su-  
permarket shopping and disco.Children's matinees were orga-  
nized by the Children's Film Foun-  
dation, established by the film indus-  
try in 1951 to try to inculcate the  
habit of cinema going in the very  
young. Unlike every other Euro-  
pean country, Britain has never had  
any coherent government or trade  
policy on children's cinema. The  
CFF is not funded by the govern-  
ment through any cultural agency. It  
is funded by the trade itself, partly  
by subventions from the Eady Fund,  
a production incentive fund drawn  
by an 8% levy imposed on the sale  
of every cinema ticket; and partly  
through a system of special union  
agreements which allowed the CFF  
to make films more cheaply than  
any other British producer.But, even in the absence of any  
government interest in cinema, the  
industry itself (in the form of the  
Cinematograph Films Council which  
disburses Eady Levy) consistently  
refused to take a responsible view of  
the social, cultural and economic  
importance of children's cinema. All  
this trade assistance came at a price.  
The CFF is obliged to distribute its  
films only through the Saturday  
matinee circuit of the two major  
cinema chains. The film rental  
charges made to the cinemas by the  
CFF, and the admission charges  
made to the children by the cine-  
mas, were pegged at ridiculously  
low levels.Most importantly, while the CFF  
was allowed to sell its films for  
cinema release abroad, it was not  
allowed to sell them to television  
either at home or abroad. It was  
thus denied access to the source of  
funding which has become vital to  
the continuation of the film industry  
not simply in Britain, but the world  
over.So what we have seen since the  
mid-60s is the steady decline of the  
children's film Foundation and of  
children's matinees. The CFF,  
under the guidance of Henry Ged-  
des, consistently refused to review  
its status relative to the demands of  
the market or the perceptions of its  
audience. Its productions became  
increasingly inappropriate and tech-  
nically abysmal.Last year the Cinematograph  
Films Council finally decided to  
bring the CFF to book in a singu-  
larly unhelpful way - they halved its  
grant. Now under the guidance of  
Bob Kellett, the CFF is applying  
itself to shaking off the restrictions  
on its self-determination. Following  
the grant cut, the CFF sank most of  
its remaining budget into *Friend Or  
Foe*, written and directed by John  
Klein, an anti-war period featureobviously aimed at a mainstream  
theatrical and television release.  
And it is negotiating with the SFD  
(the major film distributors' body),  
the BFTFA (the film producers'  
association) and the unions for the  
right to sell its entire catalogue to  
television.Yet it is this aim which points  
most bluntly to the dilemma in  
which the CFF finds itself. Since the  
early 70s British cinema audiences  
have been declining annually, with  
1982 the leanest year ever. And  
with declining audiences, the local  
cinemas which were the CFF's ex-  
hibition base have been rapidly clos-  
ing. Even those cinemas which re-  
main open have been doing so by  
programming cash-earning late night  
shows which have forced them, with  
severely limited staffing, to abandon  
children's matinees.Pragmatically though the CFF's  
reassessment of its role may be, it is  
undeniably a case of too little too  
late: because it is not simply the  
CFF which must be asked to review  
its policies - the whole question of  
children's relationship with cinema  
needs to be posed, and urgently.Over the last decade, while the  
CFF was becoming ever more mori-  
bund, children's cinema has come to  
be signified by the "family" enter-  
tainment purveyed by a series of  
Hollywood blockbusters headlined  
by George Lucas's *Star Wars* and  
*The Empire Strikes Back*, Steven  
Spielberg's *Jaws*, *Raiders of the Lost  
Ark* and *ET*, and the Salkinds' in-  
ternational co-production *Superman*  
series.Even the Disney organisation,  
formerly the technically superlative  
but thematically conservative bas-  
tion of children's entertainment, has  
abandoned its founder's belief in  
appealing to the child in the adult  
by attempting to corral the adult in  
the child with a misbegotten produc-  
tion programme - *The Black Hole*,  
*Dragonheart*, *The Watcher on the  
Watch* - which is aimed at a joint  
adult/teenage/child audience, appeal-  
ing to none.What the Disney organisation has  
been searching for is the biggest  
market of all: audiences from ages 5  
to 85. The kind of world-wide hit  
which transforms a production in-  
vestment of tens of millions of dol-  
lars into profits of hundreds of mil-  
lions. What the industry calls a  
"megablock" movie.The stakes are high - even the  
relatively modest, starless *ET* cost  
\$10m; but the profits can be astro-  
nomical. Producers seek to cover  
themselves in two ways: by limiting  
their material to relatively safe and  
proven subjects; and by aiming to  
increase their audience span. So it is  
no longer seen as viable to produce

continued on next page

EXTRA

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Tel: 041-334 9314SCFL is a Division of The Scottish Council for Educational Technology.  
Prestel page 445."The Empire Strikes Back": has  
family entertainment taken over  
from children's cinema?



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From "The Custard Boys".

### Meeting at 'the micky'

films specifically for a children's audience. Films have to be "cross-overs" to the lucrative teen and adult audiences.

The other key point about "megabuck" production is that there is a lot of it. A few very expensive films with huge audiences, instead of a large number of smaller films each with a smaller audience share.

So while it can be argued that as many children are going to the movies as ever, it should be understood that most of them are seeing fewer films in larger numbers. And the spare capacity of talent created by this pared-down production programme is being used, not to create more and different filmic experiences, but to exploit the ancillary markets in toys, video games and T-shirts.

It is not the aim of this article to attack the very real achievements of the Ealing-Lowndes-Salkin films. Indeed, these films and others like them are vital to the continued existence of cinema as a social practice. But the loss of children's cinema through the inability of our film industry to produce any alternative is a very real one. It is a denial of heterogeneity.

Three years ago the ICA Cinema, operating in the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London's Mall, near Trafalgar Square, established a Children's Cinema Club. Our aim was to explore with children the richness of cinema, to reach the parts that Disney and the CFF had forgotten were there. A different film was shown each weekend afternoon, programmed in thematic monthly seasons, with a special event each month.

Actor-director Lionel Jeffries appeared to introduce a series of the films he has written and directed for children, including *The Railway Children*, *The Amazing Mr. Blunder*, *The Water Babies*, puppeteer Barry Smith demonstrated the art of puppet-animation and early cinema special-effects in an introduction to Kark Zeman's Czechoslovakian fantasy masterpiece *Berlin Munchhausen* (with subtitles); Raoul Walsh's two-hour silent version of *The Thief of Baghdad* was presented in an original tinted print with a specially-composed piano score.

Armed with an introduction to the seasons from the members' newsletters, and fortified by badges and giveaway posters, the children documented the Flanery of *Nanook of the North* as well as the raucous Flanery of *Elephant Boy*, discovered that Alexander Mackendrick was one of the great unsung storytellers of British cinema; and learned that animation was not synonymous with Disney.

The experiment worked, and has been taken as a model for children's cinema programming by many Regional Film Theatres throughout the country. The National Film Theatre has adopted the format wholesale. If the experiment continues, there may yet be a viable alternative to the super-aesthetic, god-to-the-pantry of imported American TV series. Already the National Westminster Bank has agreed to sponsor the ICA's children's programme. It has always been notoriously difficult to find sponsorship for any cinema programme because it is usually regarded as part of a lucrative industry, and therefore ineligible.

Undoubtedly these children's programmes help to broaden young people's knowledge and understanding of cinema, but support is not being given to the production of new work for children in this country.

The only hopeful sign of recent times has been the establishment of the Children's Film Unit, an educational charity which has been built on the work of former teacher Colin Finbow.

As a teacher, Finbow set up the Forest Hill School Film Unit in 1969 as a way of deepening and broadening his pupils' interest in and response to their reading. Their first project was an adaptation of part of Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and over the next ten years the Unit produced a series of short films written, acted, photographed and edited by the pupils, directed by Finbow, and funded from the proceeds of an annual "film festival" held in the school itself. The process of building skill and confidence culminated in the production of two feature-length films: *Something Wicked This Way Comes* (1978) based on Ray Bradbury's novel, and *The Custard Boys* (1979), from the novel by Westminister School headmaster John Rae.

It was the ICA Children's Cinema's discovery and screenings of *The Custard Boys* which first drew public attention to this remarkable project. *The Times* critic commented: "Vying with *Black Jack* as the most attractive film of the moment is *The Custard Boys*. People of Rae's generation, contemporaries of the schoolboy characters in the story, may well marvel at the accuracy of the physical look of the period and the sense of sentimentality. There is a truth about this ambitious film that transcends its amateur performances and limited resources."

And *The Guardian* said, "Colin Finbow should be canonized for his guts. *The Custard Boys* is a full-length feature made at the school for about £500. And all I can say is that given the sort of money the Children's Film Foundation (no connection) seems to need, the Unit could do several times better than that well-publicized concern."

*The Custard Boys* was shown at the Cannes, Vancouver and Mannheim Film Festivals, and will shortly be seen on Channel 4.

While *The Custard Boys* richly deserved its acclaim, it was clear that if Finbow's ideas were to be developed further, the Film Unit would have to be moved beyond the confines of a single school, and Finbow could no longer pursue his double life as school teacher and film producer. So, funded by a pre-sale of his next, even more ambitious project to Channel 4, Finbow established the Children's Film Unit. The first production was *Captain Sirrick*. Originally written for the Children's Music Theatre, *Captain Sirrick* tells the story of a Victorian boy who turns to a life of crime after the death of his father. The children of the Film Unit, which is open to anyone who wishes to apply, adapted the script, designed the sets, photographed, recorded

and edited the film. Their abilities were supplemented, and doubt developed, by professional Freddie Jones, Roger Sloman, Ronnie Stevens and others, who took the adults' parts for a nominal fee in sympathy with the Film Unit's ideas.

Again premiered at the ICA, *Sirrick* cost £15,000 to produce a tiny budget which could only be met by everyone, Finbow included, working for nothing. The Children's Film Unit has followed *Sirrick* with a feature-length adaptation of William Mayne's *Swarm* in May, a powerful description of a school boy's key moment of emotional development. This film's production looks like a production budget of £25,000, which includes the cost of buying the rights and shooting on location.

The Unit has the support of the ICA, Ealing and the BBC, and those organizations can help only in terms of facilities and resources. The money for both *Captain Sirrick* and *Swarm* in May came substantially from Channel 4. But Channel 4 cannot be relied on to support the Unit single-handedly.

In the short term the Children's Film Unit needs the kind of sponsorship the National Westminster Bank has given the ICA Children's Cinema if it is to establish a secure production base to ensure the wider development of the members' projects. But in the long term the Unit needs the kind of support the Children's Film Foundation was given by its annual subscription from the Eady Fund.

The CPU trains children in the arts and skills of audio-visual expression; the wider experience of cinema provided by the Children's Cinema Clubs underpins this self-expression by informing the creative processes. The combination of the two can lay a foundation for a more British film industry which is capable of combining technical skill with ideas.

The Children's Film Unit and the Children's Cinema Clubs are the kind of schemes which long ago have found support in every other European country. And yet, far from seriously considering expanding the scope of these areas, the Eady Fund, which has been the Under-secretary of State for Trade, responsible for film, Ian Sproule, has recently announced his plan to abolish the Eady Fund entirely. It seems a sad squandering of young ambitions and imaginations, a betrayal of the future for British film.

The ICA Children's Cinema shows films each Saturday and Sunday afternoon, usually at 3pm, programmed in monthly thematic seasons. The Institute of Contemporary Arts, 211 Moll London SW1, Box office 01-930 3647.

The Children's Film Unit is based at 8 Ashridge House, Slough, Bucks SL1 1AA.

Archibald Tait is Cinema Director of the ICA.

## New visions

### Bill Hicks on video cameras

When two of the world's biggest camera manufacturers, Olympus and Canon, each launched complete portable video systems in the UK last year, it seemed that the photographic industry's long-awaited counter attack on usurping electronics firms had begun in earnest. Other famous names are expected to enter the video fold this year, bringing it to be hoped, a new emphasis on simple, truly portable video equipment for the non-professional user.

There have been no revolutions in home video camera design in the last five years, but the process of evolution has been rapid. Sony, JVC, Hitachi, Grundig, Philips and others now offer cameras with features such as high-powered, motorised zoom lenses, automatic gain control, automatic exposure, electronic viewfinders, and highly sensitive Saticon pick-up tubes, which have been adapted from professional TV cameras. Some (Panasonic and Hitachi) have introduced automatic focusing, or rather copied the idea from the Super 8 home movie cameras (which have also applied most of the ergonomics for the smaller hand-held video cameras).

Sony, in its HVC3000P, offered the first positive-negative special effects feature, which also enables direct presentation of colour negatives in positive form on a TV screen. JVC's new S-100E includes a room microphone, which narrows its angle of sensitivity as the lenses home in on a distant subject.

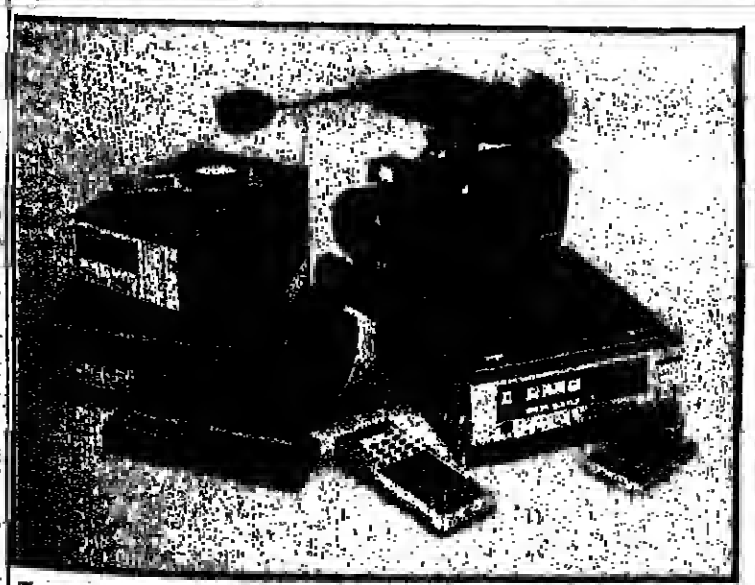
And yes, the cameras have been getting lighter and easier to use.

Sharp's "foolproof" KC51H - designed for use with its compact VHS-C portable recorder - weighs just over 1kg, while a fully-specified shoulder-mounted "ENG"-style camera like the Sony HVC300P weighs under 3kg. Price have not, however, fallen in line with those of recorders due to high production costs of the tubes and relatively low volume of output, so that the cheapest colour video cameras are still around £300.

Against this background, perhaps the most surprising feature of the Olympus and Canon launches, is how late they come. The three "domestic" formats, VHS, Betamax and V2000, are firmly established for the next few years. As Technicolour discovered, with its less than happy launch of the compact CVC format, any attempt to introduce a more portable format is likely to be doomed, particularly as the biggest companies are now working for a common mid-video format for 1985.

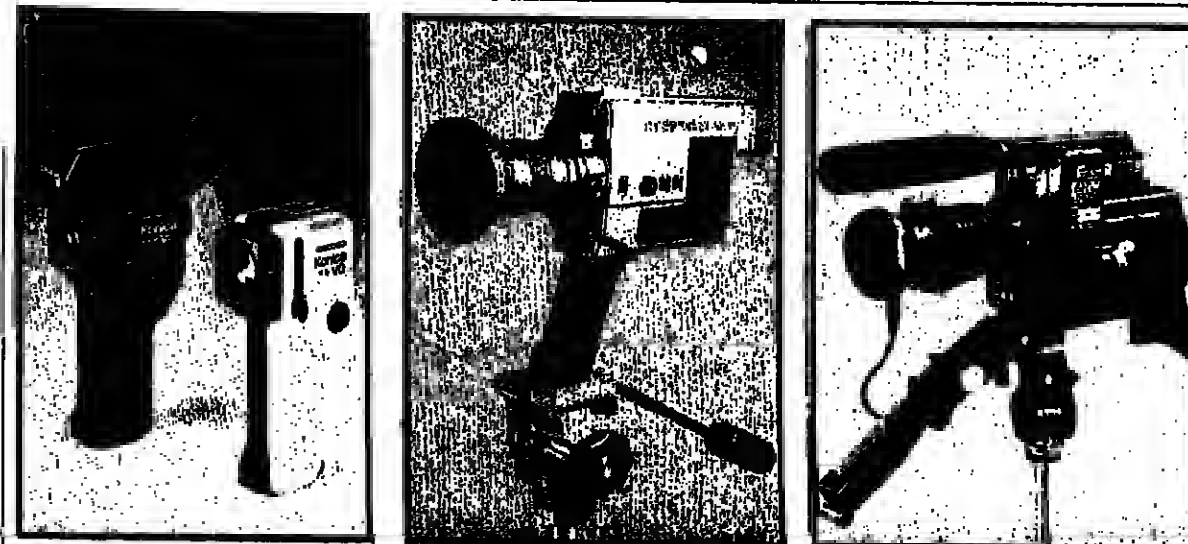
So Olympus and Canon have followed the safe but wise route of adopting the VHS format - both, coincidentally, going to the same Japanese manufacturer, Matsushita for their hardware (though strangely, not choosing that company's latest, lightweight VHS-C system recently launched by its subsidiary Panasonic in this country).

Rather disappointing to those who know Olympus and Canon as innovators in the field of 35mm SLR camera design is the fact that the same manufacturer, for their first video cameras, The Olympus VX 301 E and Canon VC-10 are both excellent



The complete Olympus portable video system.

EXTRA



The Konica Colour VC camera; the JVC GX44E camera; and the JVC S100E.

cameras, as is the Panasonic WVP 100 F on which they are based.

Each camera company has, however, made its own special refinements. The Canon version uses that company's well-tried auto-focusing system; Olympus uses a different auto-focusing system and 12-72mm lens as against Canon's 11-70mm lens.

Canon uses a "Saticon" pick-up tube, whereas Olympus uses a "Newcosicon" - each, apparently, giving comparable image resolution, with Olympus having a slight edge on low-light sensitivity (claiming that recordings can be made at light levels of 30 lux, which equates to a dimly-lit interior).

Full automation and shoulder-mounting leaves the hands free for the important tasks of steadying and aiming the camera, and controlling the recording - which in the case of both Canon and Olympus cameras is made simple by a full set of remote, soft-touch recorder controls on the left side of the lens barrel. Here also are the controls for the camera's one real novelty - a built-in character generator which allows the addition of simple subtitles (by a laborious process of selection from 60 characters) or date captions, or a running stop-watch (as favoured in TV recordings of sports events).

Other refinements - post-negative, auto-white controls for colour balance, fade-in and fade-out buttons and left or right-eye electronic viewfinder (in effect a 1 in black-and-white TV, allowing instant replay of shots on location) - are by now fairly standard on "state of the art" cameras like these, costing around £700.

For a more radical approach, we will probably have to wait until late spring when another Japanese camera company, Konishiroku, is expected to introduce its first video

camera under the Konica brand name.

Shown at last October's Photokina exhibition in Cologne, the Konica Colour VC immediately announces itself as being the result of some fresh thinking on the design of video cameras. It is a compact, hand-held camera, upright in layout, about 8 1/2 in tall, 4 1/2 in long and 2 1/2 in wide, and weighs 690g, in other words, small and light enough to fit into a pocket.

It is, however, well specified, with a 10-30mm, f1.8 zoom lens, and a 1/2 in. Saticon tube, auto-iris and three-position white balance control. Focusing and zoom are manual, and it has an optical through-the-lens viewfinder (though a 1 in. electronic viewfinder will be available as an add-on option).

Its power consumption of 4.1W is about 10-20 per cent less than most other cameras, giving valuable extra minutes shooting time from one charge of the power-pack.

The Konics will be marketed as a "universal" video camera for use with any make of recorder, and an adaptor will be available for the various types of plugs and sockets used by the main manufacturers (this, in fact, is the only real barrier to any make of video camera being used with any other make of video recorder, provided they are all to the same TV standard).

Pentax is another large camera maker which has developed a video system, but it has no plans to sell them in the UK yet. Kodak has also let it be known that it has perfected an electronic stills camera to rival the well-publicized Sony Mavica. But while Sony is pressing ahead with Mavica for a Japanese launch next year, Kodak's plans are far from clear.

It is back to the electronics companies, therefore, for the next real

innovations. Most eagerly awaited is the consumer-format camcorder, or combined camera-recorder, prototypes of which have already been demonstrated by Sony, Matsushita and others.

The rapid development of the VHS-C format by JVC, and the promise of an equivalent compact version of the European V2000 format from Grundig, leads some to suggest that these "baby" versions of existing formats will predominate.

The main partners in the 8mm video agreement, however, insist that such developments are stop-gap measures, and that only an audio-cassette sized 8mm video cassette will allow really small portable camcorder to be made.

One of these partners, Hitachi, is expected to launch the first tubeless home video camera this spring. The VK-C2000 colour camera uses an MOS (metal oxide semiconductor) image sensor instead of the normal glass vidicon pick-up tube.

This is not only much smaller than a tube, it consumes less power (about 5.3W, and only 0.1W on standby), does not have to be warmed up, and does not suffer from the flaring after-images or burn-in experienced on tube-cameras as when pointed at bright lights.

This camera, complete with all the usual refinements, but weighing only 1.8kg, represents the first step towards a light weight camcorder. The space that a tube normally occupies becomes available for a tape cassette mechanism.

Only when camcorders become available will video begin to approach the flexibility offered by small-gauge cine cameras. At the current rate of development, there should not be very much longer to wait.

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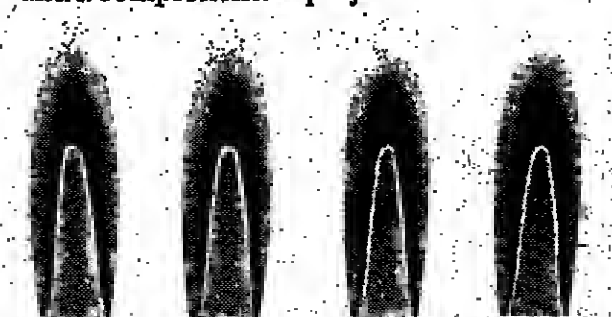
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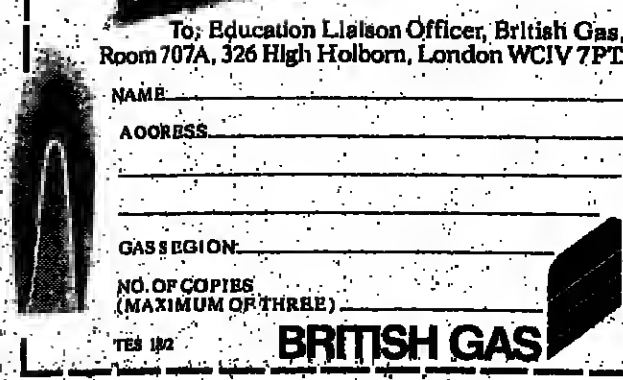
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# Cinematic eclipse

Is film as a medium for direct presentation in its last days? Peter Turner reflects

For many, in the second half of their teaching careers, the decline in educational film is a matter of great regret. The extinction of an expectant class, waiting impatiently for the film leader to clatter through the gate of the projector, can not be replicated by the classroom technology of the eighties. And yet, even in its most glorious moments, the British Educational Film Industry, like its entertainment counterpart, was never as substantial or significant as its transatlantic cousin.

In the United States, the market for educational film was vast because each school district supported a library of film. In the United Kingdom, few local authorities were prepared to accept the cost of establishing and maintaining a library of titles for primary and secondary schools. Although the National Film Library, formerly part of the NCAVE organization and now part of the BFI, helped to cover the deficiency, the British market for educational films always remained small. An outstanding film might be expected to sell a few dozen copies and, all too often, educational film producers were dependent upon sponsorship, subsidies and the overseas market.

The education cuts of the last seven years have reduced the sales potential for British films while the general increase in costs, especially labour, have made the production, even of a short film, an expensive business. As the recession hit British industry, commercial sponsorship declined while monetary policies left little cash for worthy causes. Increasingly, the distributors, seeking a new market, are offering established titles on video at a price well below that of the film print. All of this must make any teacher wonder about the future of film.

A majority of film libraries have already begun the process of changing from the distribution of film to sending out videocassettes. Surrey, which started the process in 1975, has announced that film distribution will end in 1984. The authority gave a ten year warning to allow schools to phase out film projector equipment and to purchase video recorders. During this period, exchanges of equipment between schools have been used to eliminate the need for further purchases of projectors. In other authorities, however, it seems likely that the change will be sandwiched into a shorter period of time with greater problems of equipment exchange.

For several years after 1975, Surrey continued to purchase, replace,

ment copies and a few new film titles, but in recent years this has ceased and all investment has been in video. This has permitted the gradual development of the video library while the older film library has been allowed to decline.

In fact, Surrey has developed two distinct video libraries. The first is based upon a system of duplication from master tapes to the standards used by the schools. This has a total of several thousand titles. Each programme is held on a master U-matic cassette and then transferred, whenever requested, to either Philips VCR or VHS. These domestic standards are used like milk bottles returned for constant re-filling with new product.

It is unnecessary for each school to retain a large library of video material. Whenever material is needed it can be obtained from the central collection. Schools only need to buy tape for short-term recording and to be able to hold any material which is in constant use. The central library and copying service provides a viable alternative to a very large investment in tape.

The second library which has developed is an almost exact replacement for the film library. It contains a finite number of copies of selected titles on VHS and these had to be booked for particular weeks. The reluctance of the film distributors to introduce licenced copying at an economic cost prompted this development at the present time. It is more economical to purchase single copies and to permit demand to develop before seeking a duplication licence.

Although the other major film libraries have been slower to begin this process of change, almost all have been forced to reduce their film purchases and to institute video distribution. It seems likely, therefore, that film as a medium for direct presentation to classes of pupils is in its last days. This does not mean that it will be abandoned by film producers. 16mm film is still an established production format used quite often for video masters. There is no difficulty in transferring from film to any of the various video standards, with little loss of quality, nor are there problems in using film for broadcast purposes.

Film is an international standard. It can travel easily between countries who have adopted different entities and line standards for our systems and line standards for their television broadcasting. Film prints may be used, therefore, as international masters in a way that is more difficult with videotapes. The film producer seeking the

widest possible market for his finished product may decide that film has much to commend it. Although the direct sales to libraries may be at a low level, the film can be used as a master for a variety of television applications. Channel Four offers the possibility of a new source of income for general adult educational material while the videocassette market offers the prospect of home as well as school sales.

Cable, is another potential market. Although the majority of channels may be devoted to entertainment, it is likely that many systems will include an educational channel. Certainly, some cable operators will be seeking to make arrangements with local authorities to fill a channel of their own channel system and film would make a natural programme source for such arrangements.

If an equitable licence system can be established, then educational film libraries could become, once more, an important source of income for the film distributors. Although, at present, U-matic cassette seems to be the most popular standard for tape masters, it would be as simple to use telecine from 16mm film prints. Libraries may do this either as a consequence of marketing arrangements or as a result of the constant changes in video formats.

It seems probable, therefore, that film will continue as a production medium but less likely that it will reach the classroom in this form. In some cases, it will be sold direct to the school as a low priced cassette or may be donated to the school by a concerned parent who first acquired it for use in the home. The film library, the sponsored library, local teachers' centres may offer loan cassettes to supplement the school's collection while the local cable company may provide regular replays of popular but expensive materials. This latter method would be especially appropriate for film set texts for O and A level English Literature.

In many ways, this change may increase the educational impact of film. The videocassette is suitable for teacher control. It is easy to select extracts needed to illustrate a particular lesson, difficult to sequence and to integrate a replay into a normal class lesson. Despite these advantages, there will be many who will regret the passing of the film projector and that special excitement that it seemed to generate in generations of children.



EXTRA

# Period piece

by June Wenban

The recent opening of Armley Mills Industrial Museum in Leeds provided a unique opportunity to give a stimulus to teaching the history of the woolen and clothing industries through the medium of colour video.

It resulted in a 25-minute film which is now available for schools, colleges of education and teachers' centres. The film, entitled *Scenes from History: the Woolen and Clothing Industries*, was made by Leeds University School of Education history department in conjunction with the university's Audio Visual Service, Bruntcliffe High School, Morley, Leeds and Armley Mills Industrial Museum.

Any visit, whether filmed or not, needs careful preparation if it is to achieve maximum impact and the video underlines this. Both students and pupils had made a study of the historical background to the woolen and clothing industries and the social conditions at the turn of the twentieth century. The student teachers had also paid a prior visit to the site to familiarize themselves with the process through which wool passes. Then in groups of two and three they were all allocated different short scenes, starting with a



ball of wool being placed on Colling Snowden's barge, taken along the Leeds Liverpool canal through a lock, and unloaded at Armley Mills, where sorting, carding, spinning, weaving and the examination of cloth took place. The final scenes were set in the pattern shop and the sales manager's office.

After studying the historical background and visiting the site the students then planned the acting and the text for their particular scene, a dialogue which focused both on the activity in which they were engaged and a background topic, such as health, politics and employment conditions.

On the day filming took place second form pupils, also in twos and threes and already assigned to different scenes by Jack Jackson, head of

Bruntcliffe's history department, met up to the first time with the student teachers and each small group at once went to work, rehearsing their scene until it was time to be filmed. The preparation completed, all those involved had the experience of the imaginative recreation of past events, directed by Nicholas Salmon with a two camera unit.

The atmosphere of the occasion was further enhanced because everyone taking part was in period costume, the women and girls in high-necked long-sleeved blouses, long skirts, aprons and shawls; the men and boys in collarless shirts, waistcoats and trousers, the trousers tied below the knee with string and everyone in plain shoes. Only the clothes in the buying scene were hired and had been obtained from Doreen Parker through the Leeds Arts Centre.

Dr Robin Moss, the Director of the Leeds University Audio Visual Service, is now hoping the film will encourage teachers to engage in set-up projects in mining, fisheries or agriculture. Moreover, the film has helped Peter Kelley, of Armley Mills, bring his museum to life for visitors and school parties. British Waterways have also taken a friendly interest in it, welcoming the opportunity to link the canal's historic role with its modern function.

The VHS video (other formats by special arrangement) costs £23.00, including VAT and postage and is available from the Leeds University Audio Visual Service.

# Soap opera studies

Cary Bazalgette on a pack on 'Coronation Street'

While the present forms and future development of media studies are the subject of constant debate, published teaching materials play a perhaps over-significant role in shaping actual classroom practice. In the British Film Institute's Education Department we are conscious that although we undertake every work and set up study packs, the materials we produce must also have a "teacher-training" dimension. They have to be cheap and accessible as well as given the financial and logistical constraints under which most teachers work.

An account of one of the new packs we have produced this year, *Teaching Coronation Street*, will illustrate our approach to these constraints. Work on this pack was initiated last year when the BFI Film and Video Library acquired rights to produce six episodes of *Coronation Street* on videotape. Guaranteed access to particular episodes meant that teaching notes could have a degree of specificity that is particularly valuable to less experienced teachers.

The acquisition of these episodes allowed the publication of a BFI booklet on *Coronation Street* which includes essays on narrative and character in the serial, as well as information on its production. We drew on this work, and research by a group of London teachers into the study of narrative and character in literature, to produce *Coronation Street* thus the two particular infections. It is

very much an introductory pack, both for teachers and for students, and subsequent work could lead in a number of different directions. It is also close to new developments in English teaching which have drawn upon structuralist criticism to help students handle the concepts of narrative and character more confidently. This means that it is quite different from certain other media teaching materials, particularly on news and documentary, which come from a sociological perspective.

The first exercise in the pack is based, not on *Coronation Street*, but on a Saroyan short story, 'The Great Leapfrog Contest'. Three simple tasks, analysing the build-up of character, and key points in the story, lay the groundwork for six more exercises on character, location and narrative in the continuous television serial. Some of these relate directly to *Coronation Street*, others are more general. There follow detailed notes on each of the six episodes, four of which are "paired" (Monday and Wednesday) to show the operation of the cliff-hanger. A set of 41 slides accompanies the notes, enabling character work on mise en scene, character and editing, as well as simple recall.

One crucial difference between most narratives and the continuous serial, of course, is that the former end, while the latter do not. How this affects audience expectations and the kind of story that can be told is one of the central teaching points of the pack, and offers a useful way in

to the consideration of narrative in general. Another significant aspect of the serial is the role of women: the pack investigates the reasons why women in serials tend to be strong characters, frequently initiating important actions and events. It thus sets up further work on representation and gender. Some students will also want to discuss the ideological work of serials and the possibilities of alternative forms; context is provided for this.

Our basic assumption, though, is that fictional entertainment on television is something that most of us enjoy, and that is perhaps the best reason for studying it. *Teaching Coronation Street*, by Cary Bazalgette, Jim Cook, Richard Eton, Nicky North and Richard Peterson, BFI 1983 price £5 (£5.50 inc post and packing). BFI TV Monograph 13, *Coronation Street*, by Richard Dyer, Christine Garaghty, Marion Jordan, Terry Lovell, Richard Peterson and John Stewart, BFI 1981, price £3.50 (£4 inc post and packing). Both available from BFI Publications, 81, Dean St, London W1V 6AA.

Six *Coronation Street* episodes from 1960, 1975, 1977 and 1978 are available from the BFI Film and Video Library at £6, each (plus carriage and insurance) for one week's hire. Booking enquiries to 01 734 6451.

Cary Bazalgette is a teacher adviser in the BFI Education Department.

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EXTRA

## Screen tests

Philip Williamson and Jackie Danson on an O-level examination in film studies

Since the inception of a Film Studies examination was announced in 1974, the subject has found its way on to the curriculum of a large number of schools and colleges and of some institutes of higher and further education. But whereas, in America, in 1974, there were over 30,000 students working towards a degree in film or television, and more than 100,000 taking a film course as a subsidiary to their main subject, this field is only now beginning to be recognized in Britain as a significant area of study.

At present, the Associated Examining Board is the only GCE board with a film studies examination at ordinary level, although, in allied areas, some other boards are now showing an interest.

The AEB approved syllabus, however, is already well established, and this article attempts, broadly, to pose and to suggest answers to, four questions in relation to it: why is such an examination necessary; of what does it consist; how does it operate; what is its future likely to be? The answers are directed rather more to the general reader than to those people already involved in teaching or administering the subject; and to that end we have attempted to avoid the use of subject-specific jargon, which has served only to obfuscate unnecessarily many of the issues involved.

Why is an examination in film studies necessary? The justification for the study of the subject has been well documented elsewhere. It includes arguments for the need for "visual literacy", and the necessity for a critical approach to a pervasive medium, whether it is regarded pre-eminently as a means of entertainment, as a means of communication, as a vehicle for social or political comment, or as an art form. Most well-informed educationists would probably agree that a critical awareness of the issues involved in cinema must be of crucial importance in any study of the subject. This need in no way excludes the enjoyment of watching a film, but should ultimately enhance it.

The examination itself fulfils a demand from students and teachers arising from a progressive view of the changing content of the school and college curriculum, and was initiated by an approach made, in 1971, by a group of film studies teachers based in the London/Essex area, to all relevant examining boards. Film studies was established, and continues to operate at present, as a Mode III examination administered jointly by consortia of schools and colleges in four broad geographical areas, and by the AEB.

In this form it has the advantage of ensuring that, within the boundaries required for accurate assessment, the syllabus fulfils the specific needs of centres teaching it; but the disadvantage that only those full-time students in schools and colleges registered as AEB centres and entering candidates for Mode I examinations, are allowed to enter. None the less, interest in the syllabus has increased rapidly. Although

only 156 candidates were entered for the first examination in 1974, this had risen to 732 by the 1982 examination, and it is likely that about 1,000 candidates will be entered this year.

In its present form, film studies is an ordinary alternative (O/A) level examination, which means that it is at a standard equivalent to O level, but on a syllabus judged to be more suitable for older students, such as those in a sixth form college, or those following a foundation course at a college of art. Younger students are not prevented from taking the examination, but problems might be encountered if films with X or equivalent certification were to be studied.

Although a separate examination question paper is set by each consortium, all of these are based on a common syllabus. In concept and format, this has remained very similar throughout its existence, despite



two revisions to incorporate minor but significant amendments.

The syllabus is based on an academic, rather than practical, study of film, and consists of four main areas. The section on film as industry and as cooperative enterprise is the only compulsory one. It covers the notion of film as "product"; the material on which a film may be based; the finance involved in making a film; the interconnection of production, distribution and exhibition; and the varying roles played by individuals, for example, the actor, director or cameraman, in the making of a film.

Candidates are required to study, in addition, two areas from the remaining three, which are: genre study, authorship, or an optional unit. For the first two, students may learn about the conventions and ideas at work in the western, the gangster/crime thriller, the gothic film, the musical, or the melodrama; or about the work of an individual director, such as Alfred Hitchcock or Ken Russell. The third area, the optional unit, covers topics dealing with further, though frequently related, aspects of cinema, for example, the star system, the documentary film, stereotyping or realism.

The examination is in two parts, each contributing 50 per cent of the total potential marks. There is a written paper, two and a half hours long, in which the candidate is asked to answer four questions, two from the film as industry and as cooperative enterprise section, and two from any other section. The syllabus states that the questions will be defined "to assess the candidate's understanding of the ideas revealed by the course of study and his or her general discernment of cinema". Additionally, candidates are required to submit a folder of work any one of the following areas of the syllabus not examined by means of the written paper: genre study, authorship, or the optional unit. The folder may include essays and storyboards.

In studying, most students use slide packs, film extracts, and film screenings, in addition to appropriate literature. The lack of avail-

ity and the high cost of study materials is a recurring problem, although the British Film Institute, by making available such material, has done much to obviate this difficulty. The BFI also helps to arrange study days for teachers of the syllabus.

The written paper is set by the teachers, and marked by teacher-examiners appointed by the AEB. Both the questions set and the marking are then scrutinized by the moderator of each consortium, who is appointed in an official capacity by the board. He or she ensures that the marking of both this paper and of the folder of work is standardized every year and from year to year; that grade boundaries are established in the correct position, and, in general, that all candidates receive comparable treatment.

In the present economic and educational climate, what is likely to be the future of the film studies examination? The following remarks are offered in a speculative rather than in a prognostic spirit, and they reflect the independent views of the writers rather than any official AEB view.

There are at least three developments that the film studies examination might engender, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive. A Mode I syllabus might be developed, either at O level or at 16 plus, which would allow a larger number of candidates to enter the examination than is presently possible, and would reflect more adequately the growth of the subject on the curriculum. Certainly the numerous expressions of interest received by the AEB suggest that there is a significant demand for wider availability. Conceivably, this could eventually lead to an AEB A level in the subject.

Some film studies might become incorporated into an O level examination embracing a wider context, such as communication or media studies, either as a discrete option or as a compulsory component. (The AEB already offers a syllabus and examination in communication studies at A level.) Film studies is frequently found in such a context in the curriculum at the present time.

Another development might be the introduction of a practical element, for example, one based on the production of film or video, either as a separate examination, or as a component of the existing one. In addition to these possibilities, the introduction of a separate syllabus in television studies might also be considered. A larger and larger proportion of the population is becoming increasingly subject to the influence of television; no other medium in the past or the present, including film, has been so pervasive, potentially so powerful. In the often quoted words of Marshall McLuhan:

All media work us over completely. They are so pervasive in their personal, political, economic, aes-



thetic, psychological, moral, ethical and social consequences that they leave no part of us untouched, unaffected, unaltered.

The medium is the message. If this is true, and we believe that most of it is, it seems vital to educate for the ability to approach television with a critical and discriminating attitude. In fact, proposals for television studies syllabuses were being considered by the AEB at the time of the first film studies examination, but in the light of the current uncertainty over the future of O levels, these proposals, like some of the possibilities for the further development of the existing examination, have had to be held in abeyance.

Films can be studied as high art or as popular culture; as a political instrument or as a mode of social comment; as the product of a director, a group of people, or of society in general. Whichever approach is



adopted matters perhaps less than that this subject, which is just as significant today as literature was in the nineteenth century, should continue to be an area for informed critical appraisal.

Philip Williamson is senior administrative officer and head of the visual arts department at the Associated Examining Board. Jackie Danson is administrative assistant with special responsibilities for film studies in the same department.

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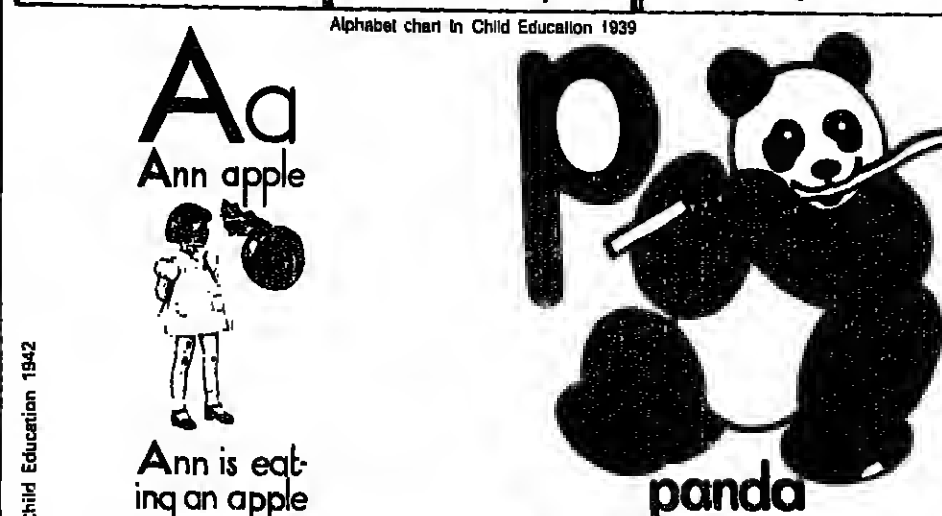
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## AS SIMPLE AS



**A** is for Apple-pie mother has made.  
**B** is for Bo-Peep whose sheep often strayed.  
**C** is for Cat who looked at a Queen.



Ann is eating an apple  
panda

from modern educational suppliers. To test the suitability of the illustration, I chose 20 children at random from a nursery class of 40. The children came from an area of predominantly owner-occupied housing on the outskirts of Edinburgh and were all four to five years old.

The children were told that they were going to play a game. I would say, "This is a picture of something. What is it?" and they would tell me. All children agreed to play and appeared to find some satisfaction in it.

Ten plaques chosen at random from a set

of Arnold Alphabet jigsaw plaques were: k kettle; y yacht; t train; g girl; w window; v van; l leg; e egg; m man; x x-ray.

All of the words were known by the children and included in their normal spoken vocabulary. They were, of course, shown only the picture in each case.

Results of playing the game revealed that these illustrations often failed to prompt the correct word. The following shows the number out of 20 who recognized and used the word intended by the artist.

k kettle 17 correct y yacht 1 correct

t train 20 correct g girl 18 correct  
w window 6 correct v van 8 correct  
e eggs 15 correct m man 14 correct  
x x-ray 1 correct

There were several types of error. Occasionally there was recognition of an object but the naming was not quite correct. A "man" was described as "a person", "a dentist" or "a doctor" (the man was wearing a white coat.)

There was non-recognition of the object as drawn. Many of the errors arose from this problem; "yacht" was one of the worst offenders. Typical answers were, "a boat" and "a life-boat". "X-ray" was another. I was offered "a man", "it's bones" and "a skeleton".

The most common cause of error seemed to be that the illustration contained too many items, all of which the child could name. There was no clear indication of the dominant word required. Some children responded by listing, eg, "a house and curtains and a window and a roof"; "a shoe and leg and grass".

Others displayed mild panic and refused to commit themselves. Here there was a clear expectation on the part of the child that there must be one right answer and an obvious fear of failure despite the "game" context.

There were various other methods of overcoming the problem. Some cleverly passed the buck to me. "I can't remember what it is. Can you give me a clue?" Others gave me a choice: "a car or van".

A brief check on the reminder of the alphabet in this set revealed three more illustrations the children failed to recognize: a sweet was described as "Smarties" and "food".

q queen was "a king" and "a princess" b baby was invariably called "a doll".

This last was particularly unfortunate, bearing in mind the common confusion between b and d.

A Ladybird A B C book fared better on the illustrations tested. It was, perhaps, fortuitous that "Smarties" begins with the same sound as "sweets" (Children like to be specific). The van was described as a mini-bus and a lorry.

But the picture that presented the widest variations was a nail. This was one case where there was not sufficient information in the picture. It was simply a nail with no clue as to context or scale. Intelligent guesses produced "pen" and "pencil", but several said "I don't know".

It seems that here is an area where publishers would do well to conduct some market research among the child consumers. Without such care on the part of the educational suppliers, examples like "y for boat" and "b for doll" will continue to make the business of learning the sound alphabet a more difficult task than we ever suspected.

Elizabeth Casclani

## Ready readers

Jane Doonan uses the power of literature to hammer home the rules of language

I have been an avid reader for as long as I can remember, and when I came to teaching it was no surprise that the favourite lesson, for all classes, was the story-time. So it was in this area, it seemed to me, English teaching should begin. During the past two years I've begun to put this into practice, and I have developed a method of teaching in which, as far as possible the pupils' work - language, oral, factual and creative writing - arises or evolves from the class reader, or another literary source.

I started to work in this way for at least three other reasons. First, and most important of all, I believe in the power of literature to give pleasure, and to invite response. Second, although there are, no doubt, many excellent textbooks, and they have their place, working from extracts of prose or poetry, with language lessons from the same, or similar sources, becomes generally dull to teach, and as far as I can tell, dull to learn. It is also activity far divorced from anything connected with how literature and language work for us most of the time outside the classroom.

Third, experience has shown me that

however perfectly a class may appear to understand and apply simple language rules concerning punctuation and spelling so that exercises performed during a lesson may be almost all correct, the next time a class writes anything of length many will repeat earlier errors. Rules learned in isolation do not necessarily become second nature to apply even a short time later. One has to "need" them to understand their importance.

The method is closely related to "topic" work but the whole book is used instead of a single theme. Initially, I read the book and decide on its strength. Leon Garfield's *Smith*, for example, offers enormous scope for language work as well as research into eighteenth century London, exploration of themes of blindness, of appearance and reality; *Carrie's War* by Nina Bawden is strong on characterization, the exploration of relationships and responsibility; *Honore Morrow's The Splendid Journey* positively invites illustrated work about the Oregon Trail and the life of the Sioux.

After considering the particular strengths of a book I draw up an assignment sheet of about half a dozen creative and research-based questions. So the assignment sheet for *The Splendid Journey* includes among other things, making maps, monographs on Indian scouts and chiefs, groundplans and drawings of forts, and opportunities to write on camp-logs, corporal punishment, planned preparations for long journeys, creative writing on nights in strange places, and rewriting a key chapter from a different viewpoint. The class will select about three assignments from each section to work on individually.

In addition, I collect short stories, poems, articles, and any material that is loosely connected to the main themes of the book - John



Arden's playlet, *Death of a Cowboy*, Robert Frost's *Out, Out*, Charles Causley's *Cowboy Song*, perhaps about a dozen or so appropriate items.

This material is collected and filed in large boxes, or the drawers of a filing cabinet. It is from this and our class reader that lessons will arise naturally. We look at the playtexts to see how to write towards an exciting climax, and how to set out scripted drama for our own scenes. Charles Causley will show us all the figures of speech we'll need, and how to make rhythm work for our own ballads, and what a ballad is, anyway. *Out, Out* will be turned into a newspaper report both for our local weekly paper, and a large national daily. The text of the book itself shows how commas and speechmarks work, backed up by additional language exercises. Pupils will need help with how to use a library card index system in order to research the factual assignments, and how to edit and how to summarize the material found in the source books.

After a half term's work on *Smith* our classroom was awash with stories about being "on the run", snow poems, highwayman songs, monographs on Wren and Dick Turpin, imaginary accounts of life in Newgate, the history of Toby Jugs, research into street cries, a group-written newspaper set in period, and designs for special household aids for the blind. Drama lessons included trust games, and a dramatization of a courtroom scene. Underpinning all this was plenty of language work of all kinds, drawn from Garfield's extraordinarily vivid style. I encourage the illustration of written work where appropriate, in the knowledge that many pupils enjoy this, and that the less able would write no more even if I discouraged the drawing. Able pupils write and draw prolifically.

I can see nothing remotely childish in decoration or illustration, and have found pleasure gained from these activities to be alive and well, into the fifth year, if pupils are given half a chance.

Fears that children will be bored if the class reader is used as a source book for lessons have been ill-founded. Interest seems to gather momentum, and the children bombard me with articles, information, and ideas. I seem to average about two class readers a term, one which will be used as I have described, the other in a conventional way. Putting the material together, to go with the book takes time. After two years I am still only just beginning, but the response I've had from the children is sufficient to keep me going.

Jane Doonan is deputy head of English at Somerville Comprehensive, Midsomer Norton, Avon.

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